

THE
VIRGIN OF THE SUN,

A PLAY,
IN FIVE ACTS.

FROM THE GERMAN

OF

AUGUSTUS VON KOTZEBUE,

BY

Benjamin Thompson, Jun.

TRANSLATOR OF THE STRANGER,

As performed at the Theatre Royal Drury-Lane.

LONDON:

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Persons.

ATALIBA, *King of Quito.*

HIGH PRIEST *of the Sun.*

XAIRA, *priest of the Sun.*

TELASKO, *an old man, descended from the Yncas.*

ZORAI, *his son.*

ROLLA, *formerly Chief of the troops.*

DON ALONZO MOLINA.

DON JUAN VELASQUEZ, *his friend.*

DIEGO, *ALONZO's squire.*

CHAMBERLAIN.



HIGH PRIESTESS *of the Sun.*

CORA, *daughter of TELASKO, and a virgin of the Sun.*

IDALI,

AMAZILI,

} Virgins of the Sun.

Priests. Virgins of the Sun. Courtiers. Soldiers.

Populace.

THE
VIRGIN OF THE SUN.

THE FIRST ACT.

The whole stage is covered with thick trees and bushes.

In the back ground appear a few ruins of an old wall, and still further, the roof of the temple. In front is towards the right side a cave, and towards the left a hill, whose summit towers above the thickets. The time is evening twilight.

ROLLA and the HIGH PRIEST *wind through the bushes.*

HIGH PRIEST.

THIS then is the way to Rolla's habitation?—
Alas! 'Tis as wild and inaccessible as the way to
Rolla's heart.

ROLLA.

Have compassion on me, uncle. I beseech you
have compassion on me, and leave me.—Did you but
understand me—did you but comprehend—

B

HIGH

THE VIRGIN OF

HIGH PRIEST.

And do I not? To understand you is to worship your idol—to comprehend you is to add fuel to your flame.

ROLLA.

Wretch that I am!—I am a forsaken reptile—a drop, which may not flow in unison with any other drop—a voice which through all animated nature cannot find its echo.—The caterpillar, which creeps upon this leaf—comes not another caterpillar forth to meet it?—But I! But I!—Oh ye Gods, if it be your stern decree, that amidst the bustle of creation, I only should be doomed to solitude—(*Casting an impatient glance towards the High Priest*) let *man* leave me in solitude.

HIGH PRIEST.

Rolla! Rolla! I am old; but if affection only be wanting to your heart, you find it in this faithful bosom.—Young man! I feel an affection for you, tender as fathers feel.

ROLLA.

'Tis well. Then be the peace of your son dear to you. Let him live according to his will.—In this cavern I am happier than thousands, who inhabit splendid palaces. Be it my grave.—Then, uncle, then promise me this one request. On some dark dreary day, lead Cora to the entrance of this cavern—let her look at the remains of Rolla—let her see how he breathed forth his lovesick soul, how the name of his beloved murderer still quivered on his lip, how his last smile evinced that he forsook the world with a blessing on his Cora. Then perhaps, affected by the spectacle, Cora will lean over me, and drop a flower—or—oh enchanting thought—a tear upon me—and that tear—Ha! 'Twill raise me from the dead.

HIGH

THE SUN.

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HIGH PRIEST.

Enthusiast!

ROLLA.

As you please—such is my way. This heart was formed for mighty passions. The common pismire-bustle of the world was loathsome to me, even as a boy. When my Play-fellows were merry and happy all around me—why yes, I played with them, but it was irksome, and I knew not what I wanted. But when the gathering clouds thickened in the horizon; when at midnight our volcanos vomited their fiery entrails, or subterraneous groans announced an earthquake—oh then my heart was light and free—my sinking spirits were refreshed—the drooping plant felt nourishment, and raised its head. As my years increased, no heaving bosom could attract my eye. Eager and resolute I gazed at honour,—my heart, my beating heart panted for battle and renown.—Each victory was scarce a cooling momentary drop, which drove the hissing blaze higher towards Heaven.—But oh, then I beheld Cora!

HIGH PRIEST.

And extinguished was the blaze which had promised to endure for ever—extinguished like a lamp, when blown at by a child.

ROLLA.

Not so. It was but nourished from another source. It was a wild devouring fire converted into a gentle cheering flame. Honour yielded to affection.

HIGH PRIEST.

A gentle cheering flame! And to whom does this flame afford light or warmth?

B 2

ROLLA.

THE VIRGIN OF

ROLLA.

(*With indifference*) I feel what you mean to say.

HIGH PRIEST.

And feel it without a blush? A youth, endowed with active valour, perhaps for the welfare of half our world, fixes the limits of exertion—in a *cave*. An Ynca, sprung from the children of the Sun, entitled to prop the first steps of the throne, reposes—in a *cave*.—A Chief, summoned by his country to command her armies, and by this honourable confidence bound to perform mighty deeds, buries himself—in a *cave*.

ROLLA.

Will you then force me to become a boaster? As Ynca and as chief, I have fulfilled my duty by victories and wounds. All my debts are paid—I paid them on that fatal day, when Ataliba's throne, assaulted by the power of Hufcar, tottered beneath him, and Rolla's sword manured with hostile blood the plains of Tumibamba. (*With exalted warmth*) Do you know the history of that day? An arrow pierced my left arm—another my breast,—a faulchion opened my cheek, and a mace stunned my brain—see,—here are the wounds—and here—and here—and here—and I kept my post—Have I then not paid my debts?

HIGH PRIEST.

(*Moved.*) Brave young man!—But the blessings of your country, the friendship of your king, the affection and applause of your troops—were these no recompence?

ROLLA.

(*With a sigh.*) They were.

HIGH

TO THE SUN. II

HIGH PRIEST.
And are no longer?

ROLLA.

No.

HIGH PRIEST.
Then curse, oh ye Gods, this worthless affection,
which choaks each seed of honour in the heart of man.

ROLLA.

Be not so hasty in your decision. 'Tis possible that this affection might incite to noble deeds as well as honour, but I—for whom should I fight?—Who will rejoice, if I still force my way up on the path of glory?—Cora loves me not—(*Agitated*) and I have no father, no mother,—I have no brother, no sister,—I am alone in the world.

HIGH PRIEST.

(*Clasping him in his arms.*) My son! my son!

ROLLA.

Leave me, uncle, leave me. I cannot return it. You, with your hoary locks and reverend robes, cannot be acquainted with my heart. I cannot separate the priest from the man.—Oh that I had a mother! God formed woman to be the confidant of man. If I could not pour my sorrows into the bosom of a wife, I might at least share them with my mother—But I have no wife—I have no mother.

HIGH PRIEST.

Have recourse then to the Gods.

ROLLA.

The Gods abhor me, because I love a girl, devoted to their service, because I love that girl more than the Gods themselves. When the Sun rises, or when Cora appears—

pears—to my senses both are alike, and to my heart—
alas! Cora is far more.

HIGH PRIEST.

May the Gods pardon thy enthusiasm!—Rolla—'tis
the way of all mankind to burn with eagerness for that
treasure, which is guarded by the dragon Impossibility.
Cora, when only Cora did but please you; Cora, the
virgin of the Sun, you love.

ROLLA.

(Incensed.) What!—*(He checks himself and casts
a look of disdain at the High Priest.)* Good night,
uncle. *(Going into the cave.)*

HIGH PRIEST.

Hold, young man! Has your friend then lost all
power over you?—Live as you like. Seclude yourself,
if you please, from all mankind—only quit this desert,
where every idea of the soul is lost in perplexity, as the
senses are confused by gazing at the wilderness around.—
Come to my dwelling. You know the wing, which
stretches to the shore. There you may live in privacy
amid the bustle of the world, and no unwelcome visitor
shall interrupt your favourite dreams. Your door shall
be shut, even to myself—not mine to you.

ROLLA.

I thank you, uncle. I feel your good intention, and
know your habitation well. It possesses many charms
of retirement; but in this cavern will Rolla live and die.
There, where the temple's roof towers above the trees
—there dwells Cora—and in this cavern will Rolla live
and die.—Good night.

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THE SUN. H T

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HIGH PRIEST.

Headstrong mortal ! Remember then, at least, your duties on the morrow. The great festival of the Sun demands your presence at the palace and the temple.

ROLLA.

Excuse me. Tell the King—what you please—tell him—I am dead. To the world I never will return.—But, to-morrow I will sacrifice to heaven—whether in a temple or a cavern is to the Gods alike. (*Goes into the cave.*)

HIGH PRIEST.

Young man ! young man ! Little dost thou think how dear to me thou art.—As yet the setting sun-beams glitter on our temple's golden roof, and in this wilderness it is already night. Scarce shall I find the crooked path, which leads me through the wood. (*He turns round, but as he is going, he encounters Diego, who is groping through the thickets, and is very much alarmed at sight of the High Priest.*) Whence come you, and whither go you?

DIEGO.

Wherever chance may lead me.

HIGH PRIEST.

Are you traversing a desert for amusement?

DIEGO.

(*With clownish effrontery.*) Yes.

HIGH PRIEST.

You have probably lost yourself?

DIEGO.

So it seems : for I find you in my road.

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THE VIRGIN OF

HIGH PRIEST.

Are you not Alonzo's squire?

DIEGO.

Not far wrong.

HIGH PRIEST.

If you be unacquainted with this forest, you'll wander still further into the wood. Follow me, and in a few moments, you'll be in the right road.

DIEGO.

(*With affected anger.*) And who told you I was in the wrong road, Mr. High Priest?—Know Sir, that throughout Castile and Arragon, Grenada and Murcia, as well as all the other lands, belonging to our king, honest Diego allows no one to know more than himself.

HIGH PRIEST.

Well then, solve this mystery. Why do I find you at night in these wild thickets, and yet in the right road? Are you alone, or is your master not far off? What are you doing here? For, you shall not convince me that you are merely come to take a walk.

DIEGO.

(*Stammering*) Well,—as you're so very inquisitive I—I must confess to you—I—I'm in love.

HIGH PRIEST.

(*Smiling*) You in love!

DIEGO.

(*With affected dignity.*) Yes,—in love—and with such fearful jealousy, and such despair! First my affection seems to carry me to the summits of the highest mountains;

mountains ; then into the deepest abyſſes of the ſea, 'till
I at length have loſt myſelf among theſe tender buſhes,
to join the turtle doves in cooing ſolitude.

HIGH PRIEST.

(*Aſide.*) It almoſt ſeems as if this ſpot were fixed on
by the Gods for the retreat of lovers.

DIEGO.

(*As above.*) Here to the ſilent trees I'll utter my
complaint, and waſt my ſighs aloft to the chaste God-
deſs of the night.

HIGH PRIEST.

You're a blockhead. (*Goes.*)

DIEGO.

A blockhead!—Thank you.—A blockhead has proved
himſelf wiſer than a High Priest for once, however.
Long live ſuch brains as mine ! 'They're as uſeful in
the new world as the old, I find.—Is he really gone ?
——I hear nothing. (*Turning to the oppoſite
ſide.*) St!—St!——

ALONZO and JUAN enter wrapped in two large cloaks.

JUAN.

Are we ſafe, Diego ?

DIEGO.

A pretty queſtion. Why yes, as ſafe as men well
can be, who are ſallying at night, thro' a wood, on a
raſcally expedition. By Saint Barnabas, I believe us
to be about as ſafe as a drunkard, croſſing the river
Amazon upon a thread.

C

JUAN.

THE VIRGIN OF

JUAN.

Hast thou seen any thing?

DIEGO.

I'm not apt to see much in the dark, but I've heard something.

ALONZO.

What! What hast thou heard?

DIEGO.

The identical voice of the High Priest.

ALONZO.

The High Priest! What did he want here?

DIEGO.

To put me into the right road—nothing more. Thus it is all over the world; the priests are sure to know the right road.—

ALONZO.

But what could bring him to this wilderness?—Velasquez, speak.

JUAN.

Why speak? Draw the sword, shut the eyes, and rush into the throng. These are my maxims in every danger. Courage is washed away by prattle, as a morsel of good earth is swept by a torrent from the naked rock: No more can deeds of danger then take root. But, were I inclined to speak, there is enough to say.

ALONZO.

What may it be?

DIEGO.

Oh, pray talk, Sir. Of all things in the world I like to hear people talk, when it's dark.—

JUAN.

THE SUN.

JUAN.

Be it so—if it serve but to pass away the time, Alonzo, 'till your planet rises.—When two lovers are to meet, they find it tedious to wait. Therefore, I'll talk till you bid me cease. And the text shall be—Friend, this adventure will never answer; believe me, it never can answer.

DIEGO.

He's right.

ALONZO.

A strange language in your mouth! When did Don Juan Velasquez turn his back upon a dangerous adventure?—

JUAN.

Hark ye, man! If you were capable of doubting my courage, I would prove it by wrestling with the first rattlesnake we meet. You know my principles. I set no higher value on my life than a single happy moment, and happy is every moment, which I dedicate to friendship. If therefore you have any regard for me, no more of this! My arm and sword belong to you. I follow your footsteps blindly through the dark; but let me at least be allowed, while I follow you, to reflect. Surely it is ridiculous to be groping here, when we might be so much better employed.—

ALONZO.

So much better! Let me hear how.

JUAN.

He who is doing wrong, may always be better employed, and by all the knights, whose blood flows in my veins—or flows not—we are in a woful way. I say

nothing of the sword, which hangs suspended by a hair, above our heads. You love Cora, I love you, and Diego loves us both. Love precedes life as the proverb says.

DIEGO.

Yes, yes, but—don't take it amiss—with me, life precedes love.

JUAN.

Granting then, that it may cost us three or four uneasy years—well, he that has lived happily, has lived long.

DIEGO.

What damn'd principles!

JUAN.

But Alonzo—this happiness—(at least what I call happiness)—this salutary balsam of the soul is inseparable from honesty and virtue. Lay your hand upon your heart. What are your ideas in your intervals of reflection? Don Alonzo Molina forsook the savage followers of Pizarro, because he abhorred their cruelties; because in every Indian he beheld a brother. This was noble. "I'll go to these mild people," said he, "and be their instructor. I'll form their genius, teach them the useful arts, and be their benefactor."—This was right noble. You went. The king of this country received you with open arms and heart. The people loved you, the family of Yncas honoured you. In you, the nobles of the land beheld their monarch's favourite, without envy. You shared his sorrows; but you likewise shared his joys and treasures. You ceased to be a stranger, and the priests, without a murmur, saw you at the service of their Gods. —What is the consequence? At one of the festivals,

Alonzo

Alonzo spies in the temple a priestess of the Sun, presenting to the king the bread for sacrifice. She is young and handsome. Alonzo is on fire, and suddenly sink all his mighty projects to the bottom of the ocean of oblivion. The vindicator of the rights of man is lost.—The fair device upon his shield—two hands clasped and exalted towards a holy cross, must give way to a burning heart, transfixd by one of Cupid's arrows.—If I want Alonzo, where am I to seek him? Among the council of the king? Among the judges of the people? Among the tutors of the youth?—Yes, there I was wont to find him; but now—aided by night, he sculks around these walls, buries his face beneath his cloak, hides himself from his own conscience, and executes his great intentions, like a wanton boy, who breaks the eggs, which are ready to be hatched.

ALONZO.

(*Displeased.*) Velasquez!

JUAN.

Away! Away with that threatening mien! It ill becomes you. No one has a right to be displeased, whose conscience is not pure. You are wondering how your jovial friend Velasquez should so suddenly become the preacher of morality. Mark this. Velasquez is always jovial—always happy—because he always is an honest man.—But as I have begun, let me finish. You, by whom every little superstition of the people was considered sacred, (because the peace of some weak mortal must depend upon it,) you rashly trample on a law the most holy of a nation, which has hospitably received you in its bosom. You seduce a chaste girl, devoted to the service of her Gods. Even rebellious nature must
assist

assist you ; these huge insurmountable walls must be shattered by an earthquake, to make way for a rash libertine to Cora's arms, and amidst this dread contention of the elements, you dare to be the murderer of innocence.

ALONZO.

Juan, you are unmerciful. Believe me, my conscience is not asleep.

JUAN.

Then it is deaf, and I must bellow to it. Ataliba is your benefactor. This good nation has receiv'd you like a brother, and in return—you have plunged a dagger in its back.

ALONZO.

Hold, Velasquez !—I acknowledge the voice of a friend, and thank you. But what would you have me do ? What do you require of me ?

JUAN.

Well, Heaven be praised ! At last you begin to awake. I require of you that you renounce these dangerous criminal proceedings.

ALONZO.

I'll speak to Cora.

JUAN.

Excellent ! Cora, to be sure, is a very proper judge in such a case ! (*Scornfully.*) Yes, I see how far you were in earnest.

ALONZO.

No, by my soul, I'll tell her all, I'll paint in glowing colours all that my afflicted heart suggests—the anger of the king—the fury of the people,—my danger.—

JUAN.

JUAN.

Your danger? Forgive me friend. You are but little concerned. Your danger, when compared to hers is but a feather to an ingot. You only risk your life——

DIEGO.

Damnation! Is n't that enough?

JUAN.

(*Proceeding.*)—She on the contrary, she risks her honour, her peace, the blessings of her father, the affection of her family, her prospects of future happiness. And finally, what a dreadful death awaits her, if you were to give life to a being, who would betray your love!

ALONZO.

Oh no, no! That's not the case.

JUAN.

Well! Heaven be praised if it be not yet the case! But who can answer that it never will be? And then—to what unbounded misery have you doomed yourself and her? She must die—oh that were little, but *how* must she die? Pent in a subterraneous vault, whose entrance is to her for ever closed,—there can I see her with a crust of bread, sitting by the light of a pale dim lamp, and gasping for a single breath of air.—Oh! my flesh creeps at the idea. In many a shape have I braved death,—but this appals me quite.——

ALONZO.

(*Embracing him.*) I'll never see Cora more.

JUAN.

Right—let us begone. (*Endeavours to lead him away.*)

ALONZO.

THE VIRGIN OF

ALONZO.

Only let me take leave of her.

JUAN.

Write a line or two, and we can throw it over the wall. You hesitate?—Oh! I see the force of your resolution.—Hoo! Wretched Cora! Already do I see her in the dreadful chasm. I see her, martyred by the pangs of soul and body, gnawing the flesh from her arms, uttering blasphemies, and discharging from its agonized tenement the soul, which you have poisoned. ——— Oh think, Alonzo, when she stands before that Judge, who will alike condemn the Spaniard and Peruvian—when she charges you with having made her the murderer of her infant ———

ALONZO.

(Drawing him away.) Come, come, let us fly!

JUAN.

With all my heart!

Just as they are going, a clapping of hands is heard behind the wall.

ALONZO.

(Suddenly turning round.) Oh Velasquez! That's the signal. My Cora! My Cora!

(He tears himself from his friend, and hastily climbs the wall. JUAN looks after him with wonder and displeasure.)

DIEGO.

(After a pause.) There he goes like an arrow. Thus it is in this headstrong world. Here has the
right

right reverend Don Juan Velasquez been preaching such a sermon as is not to be heard every day from the pulpits of Salamanca, and scarce do a little pair of heathen hands cry : "*Pat ! Pat !*" when the Arch-fiend drives all the good effects of it into the air.

JUAN.

(*Somewhat harshly.*) Do as you please. Hot-headed being ! When others leisurely pursue their way, he flies. Well!—If all end as I wish, I, as a friend, have done my duty ; if not, I can but suffer with my friend.——
'Till then, be of good cheer, Diego. How art thou ?

DIEGO.

Like a fish on land.

JUAN.

That cannot be. When engaged in a foolish enterprize, every fool is in his element, and by the holy knight St. George, our present enterprize is foolish enough.

DIEGO.

But mark the difference. I *must* do what you *like*, and you don't *like* to do what Heaven and Honesty say you *must*.

JUAN.

Indeed ! Let us hear an explanation of thy logic.

DIEGO.

Well : Were I in the place of that valiant knight Don Juan Velasquez, I should, in the first place, have preached a sermon almost like his, and if that had no effect, I should say : " My dear friend Alonzo, you will not require, that I should be roasted alive for your sake. Farewell ! I am going home, and shall take our dear Diego with me. We'll offer up a rosary for you."

D

JUAN.

JUAN.

That we may do here too.

DIEGO.

Here ? On heathen ground ? Before an heathen temple ?

JUAN.

Blockhead ! Our God is every where. But he is better served by sacred and fraternal friendship ; I shall therefore offer up no rosaries. I stay here as the guardian of my wandering friend.

DIEGO.

And why should I stay ?

JUAN.

It becomes thee to obey.—Begone, firrah. Take this whistle ; walk carefully to the left, round the walls of the temple. I shall do the same to the right. On the other side we shall meet again.—If thou descriest any thing suspicious, blow the whistle. Here, take it.

DIEGO.

(*Takes the whistle, trembling.*) To the left, did you say ?

JUAN.

To the left.—

DIEGO.

Quite alone ?

JUAN.

Quite alone.

DIEGO.

I shall lose myself among the bushes.

JUAN.

Fool, canst thou not see the walls, and the roof of the temple ?

DIEGO.

DIEGO.

Am I an owl?

JUAN.

Does not the moon shine bright enough?

DIEGO.

No.

JUAN.

No!—Ha! Ha!—I perceive Signor Diego is afraid.

DIEGO.

Why, Don Juan, to confess the truth—the night was appointed for rest, and though the *man* may not be asleep, yet his inward faculties may. My courage always goes to bed at sun-set.

JUAN.

(*Walking seriously to him.*) Friend Diego, this fist shall rouse it.

DIEGO.

(*Shrinking.*) Oh it was only napping—I'm ready.

JUAN.

Begone then, blockhead!

He pushes DIEGO to the left, and goes himself on the other side.

ALONZO springs over the broken wall, and gives his hand to CORA, who follows him.

ALONZO.

Only a little leap, dear Cora! Throw yourself boldly into my arms. (*Leading her forward.*) Here you will find a silent secret spot, formed for our loves, and guarded by our friends. 'Tis not so spacious and gloomy as your garden, where the treacherous moon penetrates on every side, and doubles every form. (*Clasping her in his arms.*) At last I again possess you.

D 2

CORA.

THE VIRGIN OF

CORA.

(*Returning his embrace.*) At last I again possess you.

ALONZO.

Oh ! These have been three long long weeks.

CORA.

Only three weeks ?

ALONZO.

Months to love.

CORA.

Years to my heart.

ALONZO.

Each evening with the twilight was Alonzo here, waiting for the signal, and listening whether you would call him to the secret raptures of one blissful night.

CORA.

Each evening I have cried, because I durst not come.

ALONZO.

But you have not been ill ?

CORA.

Oh ! I am always ill, when not with you.

ALONZO.

Tell me what has detained you. You promised to be here much sooner.

CORA.

I did promise—that was wrong ; I could but hope. Love is ever lending Hope its wishes, and is too apt to make them certainties. It seldom is my lot to do the nightly service of the temple ; but I relied upon the illness of another, whose place I offered to supply. She recovered, and thanked me for my good intention. How sorrowful was poor Cora ! How long seemed the sleepless nights !

ALONZO.

ALONZO.

I have not been more easy. The morning dew has fallen on me beneath these trees, while my clothes were still moistened with the dew of the preceding evening—while my body still shivered with the midnight cold.—See,—beneath this palm have I stood night after night, gazing at your temple.—Sometimes I have discovered a shadow where yonder lamp is glimmering, I always thought 'twas you.

CORA.

Oh! No shadow could deceive me; yet every where I saw you. I was restless; and ran with hasty steps from one place to another.—Oh tell me, are we always so impatient, when the image of man is planted in our hearts? I was once mild and gentle—I could bear the disappointment of any little wish. I could be quite composed, when a shower of rain had robbed me of a walk, or the wind had broken a flower planted by myself.—But now it is quite different. When I am sitting at my work, and a thread does but break, I can be so angry, that I sometimes am frightened at myself. (*Creeping close to him.*) Alonzo, does love make us worse or better?

ALONZO.

True love must make us better.

CORA.

Oh no, no! In my heart dwells true love, and yet I am worse than I was.

ALONZO.

Not so, dear Cora—perhaps your blood runs rather quicker.

CORA.

Or am I ill? Yes, Alonzo,—I am now often ill.

ALONZO.

THE VIRGIN OF

ALONZO.

Indeed!

CORA.

Indeed I am very often ill. But it must be so, for soon I shall not love you alone.

ALONZO.

(Starting.) Not me alone!

CORA.

(Smiling.) Not you alone.

ALONZO.

Your words are an enigma or a crime.——Cora!
——Not me alone!—(*He gazes at her.*)—No! Impossible! You look so calmly at me.——

CORA.

Why should I not? What I feel is sweet: Can it then be wrong?—An unknown melancholy has possessed my soul, a struggle never felt before.——At our late festival, as I was decorating the temple with flowers, I saw a young woman sleeping on the steps——upon her bosom lay a little smiling cherub.——My heart felt soft and warm, and without knowing it, I stretched my arms to take the infant gently from its mother.——But what so gentle as the slumber of a tender parent? Scarce had I touched the child, when she anxiously started, and pressing her jewel close to her bosom, looked mistrustfully at me.——Oh Alonzo, what a venerable being is a mother!

ALONZO.

(Alarmed.) What makes you mention this?

CORA.

Have you no suspicion? (*With the purest and most innocent delight.*) Yes, I shall be a mother.

ALONZO.

THE SUN.

ALONZO.

(*Petrified with horror.*) Great God of Heaven!

CORA.

What can be the matter? Oh never fear; I love you just as much as ever—nay more. I once thought it impossible to love more ardently, and probably was right, for in you, Alonzo, I beheld the loveliest of men. But, like an enchanter, you have to day stolen my affections in another shape, for in you I now behold the father of my child.

ALONZO.

Cora! Cora! My hair bristles towards Heaven. And are you so calm?

CORA.

Of what are you afraid? Is it a crime to be a mother? Surely no. My old father always told me, that whoever commits a crime cannot feel happy—and I am happy.

ALONZO.

How! Have you forgotten the duties of your station? To what laws did you swear, when this image of the Sun was affixed to your garments?

CORA.

To the laws of our temple.

ALONZO.

And what do they enjoin?

CORA.

That I do'nt know. My father says: "Whoever considers virtue to be sacred, can have no need of laws, but, without knowing them, will fulfil them all."—— I consider virtue to be sacred.

ALONZO.

THE VIRGIN OF

ALONZO.

And do you know what virtue is? Alas! You are as yet ignorant of the mournful difference between that virtue which is founded on the eternal laws of nature, and that, which some gloomy fanatic has fixed according to his will.—(*He clasps her in his arms.*) Cora, what have we done?—In every station, love and happiness are recompences for the pangs of travail—in your's alone—death.—

CORA.

(*With fearful alarm.*) Death!—

ALONZO.

(*In despair.*) And I—I am your murderer.

CORA.

(*Again quite tranquil*) How you torment yourself without a cause! Unaccountable man! Who will kill me—and why?

ALONZO.

You have—at least so say your priests—you have offended the Gods.

CORA.

Oh no! I love the Gods.

ALONZO.

Even if you do, still you will fall a sacrifice to their unfeeling bigotry. We have no resource but flight.—And flight——Oh Heavens! Whither can we fly in this strange country?

CORA.

You dear enthusiast, I know how to release you from your fears.

ALONZO.

ALONZO. *How of that ; come on*

Then God has revealed to you the means.

CORA. *How of that ; come on*

To-morrow shall decide whether my inward feelings be deceitful, and the Gods enraged at me. 'Till this moment, the moon and stars have been the only witnesses of our stolen loves.—Enough ! Let us make the greatest of the Gods—let us make the Sun himself a witness of them.—As yet 'tis night, and I dare stay no longer—I must away to the service of our sacred lamp. You, my Alonzo, must repose beneath these trees. Soon as the morning dawn has tipped with gold the Eastern sky, I shall again be with you, and we will climb this hill.—Then, turning our faces to the East, locking arm in arm, gluing lip to lip, let us boldly wait the rising of the Sun. Do you understand me ?

ALONZO.

But in part.

CORA. *How of that ; come on*

If I have done wrong, the Sun will hide his face, or the first beam, which lights upon me, will annihilate me. But if—Alonzo—if he, my father and my God should mount in splendour ; if he should deign to smile upon this loving couple, and we both feel well, then be unconcerned.—We are guiltless in the eye of God, and whose countenance shall Cora fear ?

ALONZO.

Dearest girl !——Affecting simplicity !

CORA.

And hear still more. To-morrow is our greatest festival. To-morrow, if he rise in un sullied glory, we deduce

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an omen; that he will be gracious to our land.—Look up, Alonzo. Cast your eyes towards Heaven. The stars still twinkle, and all around is blue; there is no threatening cloud—no breath of air.—We shall have a fine morning.—Kiss me.—Farewell. Beneath this tree will Cora find you asleep, and wake the slumberer with another kiss. *(She hastens over the wall. ALONZO, who has only in part heard what CORA has been saying seems lost in despondency and terror.)*

ALONZO.

Poor harmless being!—Oh, I am a rank rank villain! —Save her! Save her—ere the flames surround her.—Alas! 'Tis too late.—I can but die with her. She is inevitably lost.

(He strikes his forehead with both hands and leans against a tree.)

DIEGO sneaks trembling from the right side, and as soon as he espies ALONZO, whistles with all his might.

ALONZO.

(Turns wildly round, and grasps his sword.) What now?

JUAN.

(Rushing from the left side.) What now?

DIEGO.

Oh—is it you, Don Alonzo?—Why didn't you tell me at first that it was you?

JUAN.

(Clapping him on the shoulder.) Paint a winged hare upon thy shield.

DIEGO.

DIEGO.
That would be better than a blind lion. You knights always term caution, cowardice; as we, who can't write, scornfully call authors, heroes of the quill. Beside, you told me yourself to blow my whistle when I saw any thing suspicious.

JUAN.
Blockhead! How can your own master be so?

DIEGO.
To confess the truth, Don Juan, I think his appearance very suspicious. Look how he stands.
(Points at ALONZO, who has resumed his former posture.)

JUAN.
(Shaking ALONZO's arm.) Good friend! Was the farewell so very pathetic?

ALONZO.
(Embracing him.) Oh Velasquez! Your warning came too late.

JUAN.
(Holding him at a distance.) What! (Pushing him back.) Then we are all nearer the kingdom of Heaven than to-morrow morning.

ALONZO.
(Offering his hand.) Forfake me not—friend—comrade—brother.

JUAN.
(Shaking his hand.) Alonzo, I am not in the habit of calling to a drowning boy. "Thou should'st not have fallen into the water."—I rather save him, if it be in my power; but in this case it is not. If we had a vessel, or an enchanted cloak to bear us through the air, by my
E 2 soul,

foul, Velasquez would not be the last to fly. But, as he must, (*Assuming a resolute position*) Velasquez arms himself with courage; buries his face beneath his cloak, and bids the lightning and the thunder hiss and roar around him.

ALONZO.

(*Wringing his hands.*) All—all is lost! No succour! No resource.

JUAN.

Come, come,—all is never lost, as long as we retain our senses. Let us return, eat, drink, and sleep. To-morrow our minds and bodies will have gained fresh vigour—to-morrow more.

DIEGO.

The flower of chivalry, by St. Barnabas.

ALONZO.

Hold!—She will return.—At break of day she promised——

JUAN.

Did she so?—I know no office more unpleasant than the confidant of a lover; for he never supposes any one to be a mere mortal, capable of feeling the wants of nature. He never thinks that one must sleep.

DIEGO.

That one must eat—that one must drink.—

ALONZO.

Forgive me, Juan.

JUAN.

Yes, yes, I forgive you; but I shall not be cozened of my nightly rest. (*Spreading his cloak under a tree, and throwing himself upon it.*)——Necessity has no law,

law, and weariness is the best pillow.—Good night, Alonzo.—He, who has a pure conscience, can recline against this tree, and challenge the seven sleepers. (*Closes his eyes.*)

DIEGO.

(*Preparing a similar place.*) I hope there are no rattle-snakes hereabouts—nor any tiger, as hungry as myself. (*Lies down.*) Well, if I can sleep now, I shall be cleverer than I thought myself; for my head is full of thoughts, my heart is full of fears, and my stomach—empty.

ALONZO.

(*Surveys both for some moments.*) Happy people!—
(*He leans mournfully against a tree.*)

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

THE SECOND ACT.

SCENE *as before.* JUAN and DIEGO are discovered still asleep. ALONZO is wandering among the trees and bushes.

ALONZO.

WHAT an eternal night! The stars preserve their former lustre, nor does the moon grow paler.—Around me all is gloomy silence.—Noise and confusion would be welcome to a wretch like me, for they might serve to stun the voice of conscience.—What was that fool Diego saying lately?—"The conscience is like the stomach; for you are uncomfortable as soon as you *feel* its existence." The blockhead spoke the truth.—Oh my good mother! Thy golden maxims were to have guided me to a better world. Alas! They have not even accompanied me to another part of this.—Perhaps, even at this moment, art thou upon thy knees, and praying for thy fallen son.—Ay pray—pray! He needs the intercession of a saint.—Oh, away with such gloomy thoughts! All may yet be well.—Night is succeeded by the dawn—the dawn by the first sun-beam.—*(Pointing to the East.)* Behold the prospect of returning bliss. Already do I see a purple stripe in the horizon, and but the largest stars are visible.—Hark! At a distance too, a bird begins to chirp. The moment is at hand, which brings my Cora back. While

I

I hold her in these arms, conscience is deaf, and danger a mere bug-bear.——I'll awake them.—(*Shaking* DIEGO.) Diego, 'tis day-break.

DIEGO.

(*Rubbing his eyes.*) What?—Pshaw! You must be joking. It's very dark yet.

ALONZO.

No no; the moon is set, and the stars are vanishing.

DIEGO.

(*Yawning.*) I thought so—when the stars vanish, it's sure to be quite dark.——

(*Turns on the other side, mutters a few unintelligible words, and again falls asleep.*)

ALONZO.

Enviably sluggard! (*Shaking* JUAN.) Velasquez, 'tis light.

JUAN.

(*Rousing, and looking round.*) Well—and what then?

ALONZO.

Won't you enjoy this charming morning?

JUAN.

You may make a sonnet on the morning—only let me sleep. (*Going to lie down again.*)

ALONZO.

Have you forgotten that Cora is coming?

JUAN.

What's that to me? Is she coming to see me?

ALONZO.

And don't you think it worth while to open your eyes a few minutes sooner, when you may behold that angel?

JUAN.

THE VIRGIN OF

JUAN.

(*Sinking to sleep.*) I had rather dream about her just now.

ALONZO.

There they lie and slumber in contempt of my tormented heart! Their spirits are revived by inactivity.—Alas! I perceive that man is happier, the nearer he approaches to the nature of a brute—if not in the eyes of a philosopher, yet in his own—and what would he have more? (*A clapping of hands is heard behind the wall.*) She comes!—What I just now said is false. One moment of heartfelt rapture, is superior to hours of bodily enjoyment. (*He hastens to meet her—she hops into his arms.*)

CORA.

Here am I, love!—But you have deprived me of a pleasure. I wanted to have found you in a gentle slumber—to have hid myself behind a tree, thrown leaves at you, and called you idle—Do you hear me? Or are you in a dream? When Alonzo's arm clasps Cora's neck, can he think of any one but her?

ALONZO.

Sweet soul! Harbour not such a thought. In my heart reigns only *one* Cora, as in Heaven only *one* sun.—But the discovery of this night!—My peace of mind is lost.—The horrors of my conscience are indescribable. I see Death in his most dreadful shape, stretching forth his clay-cold hand to rob me of my Cora.—

CORA.

(*Laying her hand upon his mouth.*) Peace! Rely upon the Gods. Look up! Oh, my heart is full of joy!
How

How blue and clear all around! The Sun will now soon rise. Quick! Follow me! (*She runs up the hill and ALONZO follows her.*) See! In another minute we had been too late. Behold that golden glittering ball. (*With exalted feeling.*) Gaze all around, how hills and woods are bursting thro' the mist. Gaze all around—how great, how beautiful! Look! A thousand drops are sparkling on the grass! Hark! A thousand birds are warbling in the wood!—Oh Alonzo! My God is great—my breast is full and narrow—rise into my eyes, ye tears of rapture!—Oh rejoice, rejoice Alonzo—the visage of my God is clear—he is not angry. (*She kneels.*) Father, to whose service my days are devoted! Father, whose image I bear upon my bosom, and within my heart, cast down upon thy handmaid one of thy thousand eyes. Be witness of my love for this young man, and be my judge! If what I feel be criminal, oh shroud thy flaming front, or bid thy thunder clouds to gather round thee, and launch at me a bolt, the servant of thy vengeance. (*With the utmost fervour.*) Give me a token, oh my father, a token of thy anger or thy love. (*After a pause.*) How warm and mild are his beams! How friendly and benignant! (*She rises.*) Enough! I venture it in presence of my God.—Alonzo, come into my arms. (*They embrace each other.*) 'Tis done. Now I am at ease. Had our conduct been criminal he would have annihilated us.—Oh! My heart is full of gratitude and joy!—Come, kneel with me. Let us adore and thank him.

ALONZO.

I adore!—Dear Cora, the Sun is not my God.

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CORA.

THE VIRGIN OF

CORA.

Oh yes, yes; he is *your* God too; he shines upon us all. He gives us nourishment, and life, and warmth.— I beseech you, kneel with me.

ALONZO.

(*Struggling.*) Dear Cora!—

CORA.

Ungrateful man! Who gave you Cora? Shall I be ashamed of you before my God?—Good Alonzo— if you love me—

(*She kneels and draws him by the hand after her.*)

ALONZO.

Who can resist the sweet enthusiast? (*Kneels.*)

CORA.

Silent thanksgiving,—the silent sacrifice of both our hearts.—

ALONZO.

We offer unto thee, God of all Gods.—

(*Both sink into tacit adoration.*)

ROLLA comes from the cave.

ROLLA.

Again so early! 'Tis scarcelight. The Sun rises and sets, and finds me still awake. Patience! A time will come, when he will find me still asleep. (*He espies JUAN and DIEGO.*) What have we here? Two of the foreigners, who dwell among us. Doubtless they have been benighted in the forest. I'll awake and refresh them. But first my morning prayer to thee, my father.

(*He turns to the East, and as he raises his hands and eyes towards heaven, he espies the lovers on the hill. A*

cry

cry of horror escapes him, and he stands rooted to the spot, as if he saw a spectre. CORA and ALONZO rise with their faces towards the Sun, and sink into a tacit embrace. ROLLA, in a voice choked with agony and rage, cries "CORA!"

The lovers are dreadfully alarmed, turn, and look down. CORA utters a shriek, and sinks in a swoon on the brow of the hill. ALONZO, for a moment undecided whether to rush down, or lend assistance to CORA, is led by affection to the latter—he kneels at her side, and endeavours to wake her. ROLLA is in a violent tremor, but never alters his posture or place, and rivets his eye upon the couple.

ALONZO.

(Who cannot forsake CORA.) Velasquez! Diego!
To arms! To arms!

JUAN and DIEGO.

(Half asleep and springing up.) What now?—What's the matter?

ALONZO.

Hew him down!

JUAN and DIEGO.

(Still confused and drawing their swords.) Whom? Where?

ALONZO.

Down with him, ere he escapes!

JUAN.

(Understanding him, and pointing to ROLLA.) This solitary man?

ALONZO.

Cleave him to the earth! We are betrayed.

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DIEGO.

THE VIRGIN OF

DIEGO.

(Brandishing his sword.) Two to one? Here am I.

JUAN.

(Very coldly.) This solitary unarmed man?*(He returns his sword into the scabbard.)*

ALONZO.

(Leaves CORA to her fate, draws his sword, and rushes down the hill against ROLLA, whose eye is still rivetted upon her.) Then I myself must—

JUAN.

(Meets and seizes him.) Hold, friend—or foe, if you dare to stir another step.

ALONZO.

Heavens! Velasquez, have you lost your senses? We are betrayed, Cora's life depends upon it. *(Struggling.)*

JUAN.

(Throwing him violently back.) Learn to curb your temper, mad-man. *(Approaching ROLLA.)* Me thinks I must before have seen thee. Art thou not Rolla?

ROLLA.

(Recovering.) I?—Yes I—Rolla is my name.

JUAN.

Rolla, the chief! Right, thou art he. *(Offering his hand.)* I greet thee as one of the bravest and noblest warriors of the country.

ROLLA.

How is all this? 'Tis still very early.—*(Holding his head.)* Can it be a dream? *(After a pause, again intently gazing at CORA.)* No! By the Gods, 'tis not a dream.

JUAN.

JUAN.

True, 'tis not a dream, though I already read thy stern conclusion in thine eye. Probably that girl is known to thee by the image of your God-head, which adorns her bosom. She is a virgin of the Sun.

ROLLA.

Yes—her name is Cora.

JUAN.

And this stranger is thy monarch's favourite, who saved his life at Cannara, while thou wert fighting for his throne beneath the walls of Cusko. Dost thou remember him?

ROLLA.

(Offering his hand to ALONZO.) 'Tis Alonzo.

JUAN.

Now, Rolla, thou art as I hoped to find thee. Thou wilt have sensations and ideas far different to your priests, who gaze upon the Sun untill their eyes are dazzled, and view all earthly things in dimness and confusion. Thou art acquainted with the world. Thou knowest how the heart of man is ever agitated by contending passions. The most stubborn and inveterate of them is *love*. He only can oppose it, who was never worthy of the contest.—Behold this virgin—she is beautiful.

ROLLA.

To whom dost thou say this?

JUAN.

Behold this man—he is rash. That he saw her, that he loved her, is his crime.

ROLLA.

Is no crime.

JUAN.

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JUAN.

Then have I not mistaken Rolla.

ALONZO.

And thou wilt be silent? Thou wilt avert from Cora horrors not to be described?

ROLLA.

I betray Cora!—Know, young man, for whole years I have loved—adored her.

ALONZO and JUAN.

(Both much astonished.) What?

ROLLA.

Oh Spaniards! No language can describe to you what I feel for Cora. She was almost still a child, when I first marched against the rebels, who dwell at the foot of the Sangai. At that time she wept when we parted, and to this moment I have known no other joy but the remembrance of those tears. I returned. Alas! All was changed. I found no more the lovely open girl, whom I had left, but a virgin devoted to the Gods. I wished to marry her. She saw the purity and ardour of my love, but she supposed herself inspired—she called the Sun her husband, and scornfully looked down on me. Soon came the day, on which a solemn oath made her for ever a Priestess of the Sun, and me a sacrifice to misery.—For a few years I have been wandering to and fro; I have gained reputation for my valour because I courted death,—and of late I have fixed upon this cavern as my dwelling—this cavern that hides me from the Sun, who robbed me of my Cora.

During this account ALONZO has been in vain attempting to wake CORA from her swoon; he now walks to ROLLA, and seizes his hand.

ALONZO.

ALONZO.

Believe me, from my soul I pity thee. But how can I confide in thee, who art my rival? Swear to me.

ROLLA.

I swear to thee! And what?

ALONZO.

That the vengeance of the Gods may light upon thee, if thy tongue betray the secret, which accident has now discovered to thee.

ROLLA.

I will not swear.

ALONZO.

Thou wilt not? And thou lov'st Cora?

ROLLA.

That is my very reason. What need of an oath?

ALONZO.

That I may be at ease.

ROLLA.

What is thy ease to me?

ALONZO.

I beseech thee. Wilt thou rack me with eternal tortures? Wilt thou force me to become a villain—for, mark me—there are cases, in which a crime becomes a virtue.

ROLLA.

(*Scornfully.*) Indeed!

ALONZO.

As long as the most distant suspicion whispers to me that thou canst betray my Cora,—mark me Rolla—I revere thee, but by my God and by thy God, I'll murder thee.

ROLLA.

THE VIRGIN OF

ROLLA.

I will not swear.

ALONZO.

Do—I beseech thee, Rolla. What must I think of this refusal? Thou see'st how I am agitated—thou see'st how I tremble—how my veins are swollen—thou see'st that anguish has nearly robbed me of my breath. For pity's sake swear to me.

ROLLA.

I will not swear.

ALONZO.

(Draws his sword, and rushes towards him.) Then die!

JUAN.

(Hastily interposing.) Thy senses again lost! Back! Back! Art thou a knight?

ALONZO.

Let me pass—or my sword shall force the way.

(He tries to extricate himself. ROLLA calmly keeps his place.)

JUAN.

His fury overpowers me—*(He has just found an opportunity to tear his sword from his side, which he throws to ROLLA.)* Rolla! Take it. I can no longer restrain him. Defend thyself.

ROLLA.

Let him come. For Cora I die willingly.—

(During this tumult CORA has revived. Her first look falls upon the combatants, and shews her their danger. She rises with wild anxiety—rushes down the hill, and flies directly into ROLLA's arms.)

CORA.

CORA.

Alonzo, what would you do?

ALONZO.

(*Dropping his sword.*) How! You yourself!—You yourself!—'Tis for your sake—Should he betray us, you are lost.——

CORA.

(*With innocent confidence.*) He betray me! Rolla, my friend, betray me! He, who was my defender, my mediator in my childhood!—How often, when my mother has been angry, has he appeased her!—Do you still recollect it, Rolla?

ROLLA.

(*Much agitated.*) Oh yes!

CORA.

And he—he betray me!

ALONZO.

Then why does he deny the oath which I require?

CORA.

Why any oath? Look at his eye—there you may read he is our friend.

ROLLA.

(*Clasping her to his heart.*) Now do I wish to die.—Oh ye Gods! This moment, let me die. 'Tis so happy—so blissful! Cora confides in me—I hold her in my arms—I speak to her—I hear her enchanting voice again.—Alas Cora, 'tis now five years since I have seen you, but from a distance.

CORA.

(*With heartfelt delight.*) Indeed, I rejoice as sincerely

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THE VIRGIN OF

creely as you, that we now meet each other. All the happy days of childhood float before my eyes when in your presence.

ALONZO.

(*Leans on his sword, and casts towards them a glance of jealousy.*) Cora, you distress me.

CORA.

By what?—Oh you little think how dear to me he is!—He loved me many years ago. We were destined for each other. Were we not, Rolla?

ROLLA.

(*Much affected and confused.*) Yes, yes—we were—for your worthy mother—oh had she not died so soon—who knows?—

CORA.

And at that time, Alonzo, I used often to deride him, because I had not learnt the force of love. Forgive me, Rolla. Now I have learnt it better. Indeed I must have often hurt you bitterly.

ROLLA.

Bitterly! Bitterly!—But be it forgotten—this moment is so blessed.

CORA.

(*To ALONZO.*) Hear how kind he is! Oh how often has my mother said to me: “Rolla is a good man, marry him, and I shall die in peace.”—But when she died, Rolla was fighting for his country, and a more holy flame possessed my heart. He returned—I could not love him—my heart belonged to the Gods, and I fighed for that day, on which I was to be wedded to the Sun.

ROLLA.

ROLLA.

And nature has at length subdued these flighty notions? At length you love?

CORA.

Yes, Rolla, you shall be entrusted with my love.—This young man was standing in the temple on the king's right hand, when I for the first time saw him—scarce could my trembling frame support the cup of sacrifice. His sparkling eye was rivetted on me, and soon betrayed his feelings.—But I was confined within the limits of our court, while he was wandering round these walls, and we both renounced the hope of ever being able to embrace each other. The Gods looked down and pitied us. Can you remember that terrific day some few months since, when our volcanos vomited, and the sea boiled, and the earth trembled? Many a palace was levelled with the ground. Even the sacred temple of the Sun was rent, and its huge walls nodded to destruction. We poor shrieking wretches flew from side to side—death was in our cells—death in the open air. Our cries were mixed with the dread howlings of tumultuous nature. Then it was, that this adventurous Alonzo espied through a thicket a chasm in the wall. He ventured over it. One stone tumbled on another as he trod upon them. Here the earth, and there my arms opened to receive him. Darkness concealed our loves, and since that day, Alonzo many times has ventured through these ruins.

ROLLA.

I tremble, Cora. What a rash adventure!

ALONZO.

Oh tell him all—the dreadful consequences of your weakness—and my villany—tell him—

THE VIRGIN OF

CORR.

(With the utmost innocence.) Yes, dear Rolla—

ROLLA.

(Overpowered with horror.) What! What! Rash inconsiderate girl! And you, Alonzo, though a stranger to our laws and customs, did you not even know that—Oh ye Gods!—You must fly! You must fly!

JUAN.

But whither?

ALONZO.

Oh Rolla! Rescue her.

CORR.

(Affrighted.) And is it true, then, that though the Gods above are not displeased, it is here below a crime?

ROLLA.

How it has made me quake!—As yet I am not master of myself.—Hear me, Cora, do you love him?

CORR.

As my own soul.

ROLLA.

Do you feel that in his arms repentance never will assail you? Are you willing to pass the remainder of your days as his wife?

CORR.

I am.

ROLLA.

(To ALONZO.) And you—do you feel the value of that sacrifice, which she now offers to you?

ALONZO.

I feel it.

ROLLA.

Enough then! I will save you. *(He walks between them.)*

them.) Come hither! Accept me as your brother. Cora, my dear sister, (*He lays her hand in ALONZO's hand.*) I join thee to this man. May the shade of thy mother hover above us at this solemn moment! May her blessing be upon thee!—If Cora be happy, Rolla is happy too. (*He turns from them, and wipes away a tear.*)

ALONZO and CORA.

(*Hanging upon him.*) Our brother!

ROLLA.

(*Embracing both.*) I am your brother. I will attend you. In a desert land beyond the blue mountains, I have a friend.—He rules a good and gentle tribe, and is a subject of the king of Cusco, whom he followed with his valiant troops in our last war. Fate cast his son into my hands, a prisoner and sorely wounded. He was a hopeful youth. He was rescued from the jaws of death beneath my care, and I returned him to his father, without ransom. Since that moment the good people know not how to prove their gratitude. With transport we shall be received, and in their distant woods, your love will find a safe retreat. There will I dwell with you contented and happy, because Cora is happy, and at last joyfully ascend to my father, lamented by a brother and a sister.

CORA.

Oh good Rolla! How will my mother then thank you!

ALONZO.

Noblest, best of men! Scarce dare I meet thine eye.

JUAN.

(*Half aside, and concealing a tear.*) By all the Saints, if this be not a Christian, I am a heathen!

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ROLLA.

Now let us collect our senses. Flight is resolved, but how and when? As yet there's much to settle.

(During this scene DIEGO has been principally listening in the back ground whether all was safe—)

DIEGO.

(Anxiously approaching.) I hear a noise—I hear two women whispering behind the wall.

ROLLA.

Quick! Away into my cavern!

(As they are going, IDALI and AMAZILI have already crept through the breach in the wall, and are listening inquisitively.)

ALONZO.

'Tis too late! They are already here,

IDALI.

(Calls from the back-ground.) Cora! We want you.

CORA.

I'm coming.

ROLLA.

Hold! They have seen and heard us. For Heaven's sake, let them not leave us thus! We must rock their fearful modesty to rest, and bring them over to our interest.

JUAN.

That were a master-piece even for a minister of state. If thou canst manage this, Rolla, I shall esteem thee capable of conquering provinces without a blow.

JUAN.

Nothing easier, Don Juan. Flatter them. They are but women.

JUAN.

JUAN.

Won't you come nearer, pretty creatures?

IDALI.

(To AMAZILI.) I believe he means us.

AMAZILI.

Look only how he stares at us! Let us run back.

IDALI.

Cora, come! The High Priestess has sent us to look for you.

ALONZO.

(In a tone of intreaty.) Come nearer, pious virgins.

JUAN.

Let us do homage to your charms.

IDALI.

(To AMAZILI.) Shall we run away?

AMAZILI.

Yes, Idali. (*Neither of them stir from the spot.*)

CORA.

I'll go with you directly. Why do you hide yourselves behind the trees? Come hither, sisters!

IDALI.

Oh no. Why, you're standing among men.

JUAN.

We men! What do you take us for, pretty child? We three are Spaniards. That one man will retire, I dare say, if you are afraid of him. (*Gives a signal to ROLLA.*)

ROLLA.

With all my heart! (*He withdraws to the mouth of the cave.*)

JUAN.

THE VIRGIN OF

JUAN.

Now lovely girl, still afraid?

AMAZILI.

(To IDALI.) What think you? Should we go nearer?

IDALI.

Go first—I'll follow you.

AMAZILI.

No, you're older than me.

IDALI.

But you crept through the wall first.

AMAZILI.

But you saw the hole in the wall first.

JUAN.

That dispute is soon settled. (*He runs between them, and draws them forward with him.*) Now, you may swear that neither of you went first.

AMAZILI.

(*Quite terrified.*) Oh Idali! He has taken hold of me.

IDALI.

And me too.

JUAN.

Be easy, be easy, my dearest children. No harm shall be done to you. (*Taking hold of IDALI's chin.*) Your bloom is like the rose, (*Turning to AMAZILI.*) and your's like——like——(*At a loss for a comparison.*)

DIEGO.

(*With affected gallantry.*) Like the sun flower.

JUAN.

(To IDALI.) What pretty blue eyes you have!

DIEGO,

THE SUN.

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DIEGO.

(To AMAZILI.) What a roguish look you have!

JUAN.

How sweetly you can smile!

DIEGO.

How tempting your lips are!

JUAN.

(Seizing IDALI's hand.) And this hand—how soft and warm!

DIEGO.

(Clasping AMAZILI's waist.) And this waist—how neat and slender!

AMAZILI.

(To IDALI.) Shall we run away?

IDALI.

I think we might as well stay a little longer.

AMAZILI.

But are you certain that you're not men? We must die, if you deceive us.

JUAN.

Never fear! In our arms dwells happiness.

DIEGO.

In our hearts, affection.

IDALI.

(Playing with JUAN's hair.) See! What pretty ringlets!

AMAZILI.

(Stroking DIEGO's cheek.) And what a rosy cheek!

JUAN and DIEGO give their girls a kiss.

H

IDALI

THE VIRGIN OF

IDALI and AMAZILI.

(Both alarmed.) Oh! What was that?

IDALI.

(Drawing her breath with difficulty.) Oh! I can scarce breathe.

AMAZILI.

(The same.) I felt it to my finger-ends.

CORA.

Come, sisters, we shall be missed.

IDALI.

And the High Priestess will scold us.

AMAZILI.

And we must dress ourselves for the feast to day.

IDALI.

And there's nobody in the temple, to take care of the holy lamp.

DIEGO.

Never mind—if it be extinguished, you can light it again with those fine eyes.

CORA.

Tell me what the High Priestess said to you, Idali.

IDALI.

Well—we went down to the temple this morning to take your place, and so we could n't find you—and so we went to the High Priestess to tell her—and so she told us to look for you in the garden.

CORA.

Nothing more?

AMAZILI.

And if we found you, we were to bring you to her.

JUAN.

JUAN.

And if she asks you where you met with Cora, what shall you answer?

IDALI.

We'll tell her all about your curly hair, and your nice words.

JUAN.

For Heaven's sake no, pretty children.—She may be angry at your having staid so long, and forbid you to see us again. (*Coaxing her.*) Should n't you like to talk a little with us, now and then?

DIEGO.

(*Coaxing AMAZILI.*) I like you, you little rogue. Won't you come again?

AMAZILI.

(*To IDALI.*) What think you, Idali?

IDALI.

We'll see,

JUAN.

Rather say, that Cora had fallen asleep in a corner of the temple, and at day-break, the shadow of a pillar had hidden her from your sight.

DIEGO.

Or the shadow of a palm in the court.

ALONZO.

Oh delightful!

IDALI.

What a good thought!

CORA.

Come then, let us go!

IDALI.

(*To AMAZILI.*) Come away!

H 2

AMAZILI.

THE VIRGIN OF

AMAZILI.

Come!—

Neither of them quit the spot.

JUAN.

Go, sweet girl!

DIEGO.

Go, go, little wicked creature.

IDALI.

(Tarrying.) Well, I'm going—but can't you—make us feel so odd and close and—and—as we felt before?

AMAZILI.

To DIEGO.) Try wether I shall be so frightened this time.JUAN and DIEGO *kiss them.*

IDALI and AMAZILI.

Oh!—*(With a deep sigh.)* Well!—Farewell, farewell!

CORA.

(Embracing ALONZO.) Farewell, my love!

ALONZO.

Soon to be my wife. *(They part.—The virgins all go.)*

ROLLA.

(Advancing.) Have you tamed them?

JUAN.

Yes. Rolla knows the sex.

ROLLA.

By report, Don Juan.—

DIEGO.

I begin to relish this adventure. What a fly little wench it was!

JUAN.

JUAN.

Yet the portentous clouds seem still to gather, and to lower towards us.

ALONZO.

Oh brother! Haste! Haste, to save us!

ROLLA.

Be at ease, and let us now consult together. Oh! I feel fresh vigour nerve my every limb!—I am another man. I feel again that active spirit, which heretofore inspired me—I am again attached to this world.—Thanks be to Cora for the gentle shower, which has revived this withered plant. (*Full of majestic heat.*) Yes, we will fly. Dangerous is the flight, and therefore better. When our pursuers press upon our heels—when their shouts are bellowing in our ears, and their harrows hissing round us—Ha! That will be life! (*With increasing ardour.*) To fight for Cora!—To wield my sword for Cora!—Then you shall see what Rolla is! You called me brave beneath the walls of Cusco.—You called me brave upon the plains of Tumibamba.—Pshaw! Pshaw! Never have I fought for Cora. For Cora and in Cora's presence!—Oh! I shall be a God!

ALONZO.

(*Embracing him.*) Great man! Oh look but friendly at me, that I may be sure thou hast forgiven me.

ROLLA.

No, Alonzo, give me no more credit than I merit. All for Cora! Nought for thee. Mark me. Were Cora to throw a paltry flower into the sea, and say, she wished for it again, I would plunge in, and fetch it at the peril of my life. For this reason then, I am thy friend, and for this reason I have forgiven thee.

ALONZO.

THE VIRGIN OF

ALONZO.

Let me at least hope, that thou wilt one day think me worthy of thy friendship for my own sake.

ROLLA.

Cora loves thee. What can'st thou wish for more? —Oh if Cora loved but me, the Gods should sue to me for friendship.—But here are we talking, when we should be acting. Come into my cavern—there we are safe from every listener.—Let us settle the *how*, *where* and *when*, and then be merry together, for to-day I'll drink—oh I am already intoxicated with delight. From head to foot I feel it. My every nerve is strung like a tough bow.—To-day I could subdue the world.

He seizes ALONZO's hand and goes with him into the cave.)

JUAN.

(As he follows them.) Happy is it for the king of Quito that this man is in love. To love Cora, or to dethrone him was the destination of such a hero. *(Goes into the cave.)*

DIEGO.

Drink!—Drink did he say?—Here am I.—Let us see, who can empty most to the health of his mistress. *(Goes into the cave.)*

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

THE THIRD ACT.

SCENE, *the chamber of the HIGH PRIESTESS in the house of stars. Various cages, containing turtle-doves, parrots, and other tame birds are hanging or affixed to the wall.*

HIGH PRIESTESS.

(Very busily employed in feeding the birds by turns.)

THERE, little Bibbi! Take it! Take it! You little wretch, you've swallowed it all at once.—What a time these girls stay! They're stuck in some corner and talking nonsense, of course.—Yes, yes, Looloo,—stop—stop—you shall have your share. There! There!—These idle beings would tire any one's patience. Heaven knows where they have crawled to. They are as slow as tortoises.—Come hither, little Doodoo, come hither. *(Chirps and snaps her fingers.)* There! Take that, and give some of it to your wife. *(Suddenly drawing her hand back.)* Oh you rogue—you can bite too, can you?—No, this is too provoking. The Sun is already high above the hills. These thoughtless girls rely upon my kind forgiving heart—don't they, Bibbi? I look at them too often thro' my fingers—don't I, Looloo?—Hunger and confinement make people tame and obedient—don't they Doodoo?

(IDALI and AMAZILI, almost deprived of breath, burst into the room.

IDALI

THE VIRGIN OF

IDALI and AMAZILI.

(Together.) Well! Here we are already.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Gently, gently, girls!—Are you frightened, little Bibbi?—So you really are here *already*?

IDALI.

Yes—how fast we've run!

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Where are you come from, then?

IDALI.

From the garden.

AMAZILI.

From the temple.

} *Together.*

HIGH PRIESTESS.

One of you tells a falsehood.

IDALI and AMAZILI.

(Together—alarmed.) It was I.—

HIGH PRIESTESS.

What? One of you tells another falsehood. What can all this mean? Idali, stand in that corner. There! Amazili, come hither. *(She leads her to the opposite side of the stage, and lowers her voice.)* Tell me honestly, are you really come from the temple?

AMAZILI.

Yes.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Well, stand still. *(She goes to IDALI.)* I can scarce believe it yet. Amazili insists upon it, you are come from the garden. Tell me the truth.

IDALI.

Yes, we are come from the garden.

HIGH

—What? You seem to me two very strange creatures. But I must be at the bottom of this.—Stay in your corners.—What do you mean by that winking, and nodding, and shaking of heads?—Be quiet, I say, and look on the ground. There—*(She goes to AMAZILI.)* Have you found Cora?

AMAZILI.

Yes.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Where did you find her?

AMAZILI.

In the shadow of the thick palm, which stands at the temple-gate. She had fallen asleep there.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Very well. Now, don't move an inch from your place, and rivet your eye upon the floor. *(She goes to IDALI.)* Have you found Cora?

IDALI.

Yes.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Where did you find her?

IDALI.

In the shadow of a pillar in the temple. She had crept there, and was asleep. We had run past her perhaps twenty times, and had never seen her.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

What? Come hither, both of you. *(She seizes them by the hands, and stares in their faces by turns.)* You are two impudent deceivers. You say that she was asleep within the temple, in the shadow of a pillar, and you,

IDALI

IDALI. at

at the gate of the temple, in the shadow of a palm.—
(IDALI and AMAZILI quite alarmed and confused, hem
and cough.)—Well?—Am I to have an answer?

IDALI.

(To AMAZILI.) You silly being—you've forgotten
every thing.

AMAZILI.

No, but you have.

IDALI.

No, but you have, though.

AMAZILI.

I'm sure mine told me to say in the shadow of a palm.

IDALI.

No, but mine told me to say in the shadow of a pillar.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Your's, and your's? What do you mean. (IDALI
and AMAZILI start and stammer.) Will you make a
voluntary confession, or must I use other means?

IDALI.

(To AMAZILI.) There now—this is all your fault.

AMAZILI.

No, but it's your's.

IDALI.

And why is it? I'm sure I should n't have mentioned
him first.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Him!—Whom? Whom? Abandoned children!—
The Gods protect us from abomination! I verily be-
lieve that you have been with men.

IDALI and AMAZILI.

(Together.) Oh no! Oh no!

IDALI.

IDALI.

They were not men.

AMAZILI.

Only Spaniards.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

(Transported beyond herself.) Spaniards! What! Spaniards! (Suddenly quite composed.) Oh—only Spaniards? Well, there may be no great harm in that. Were there many?

AMAZILI.

(Quite happy and talkative.) Three—one for Cora, one for Idali, and one for me. Mine had such nice brown hair, and nice brown eyes too.

IDALI.

Mine had such pretty black curls, and such a pretty face.

AMAZILI.

But mine was the prettiest,

IDALI.

No, he was not—for mine was prettier.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Be quiet! Be quiet, children! We can determine that at another time. Now tell me, by what sorcery these Spaniards found their way into the temple.

IDALI.

They were not in the temple,

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Then they must have flown over the lofty walls of the garden.

IDALI.

No—they were not in the garden,

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AMAZILI.

THE VIRGIN OF

AMAZILI.

(*Raising her voice above IDALI's.*) But they *might* have been in the garden, as easily as we were out of the garden.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

You out of the garden! But let me hear. How did you contrive that?

IDALI.

Well—we went to look for Cora as you told us, and ran all ways, and called her name, but nobody answered. And so, as we were hearkening, and listening to every little sound, we thought all at once that we heard several voices behind the wall. It was not far from the harbour, where the little brook is lost among the bushes. And so we followed the noise, and crept gently through the thick trees, while the branches struck against us, and scratched our faces. And so, all at once we found a large large hole in the wall quite from top to bottom, so wide that we had only to hop over a stone or two to be out.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Well—and so you did hop out?

AMAZILI.

You know we were obliged to do that, if we wanted to find Cora.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

To be sure.—And so you did find Cora?

IDALI.

Yes, among the three Spaniards. At first we thought they were men, and were going to run away. But when we had looked at them a little nearer, and heard that they were only Spaniards,—why we consented to talk and play a little with them.

AMAZILI.

AMAZILI.

And they made us promise to come again, too.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Indeed!—And you did really promise?

IDALI.

Why—half and half.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Well, but you mean to keep your word?

AMAZILI.

What think you, Idali?

IDALI.

Why, if you permit us.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Oh, to be sure.—Now go, and send Cora to me. In the mean time dress yourselves, break the bread, and put it into the basket for sacrifice.

IDALI.

(*Seizing AMAZILI's hand.*) Come, sister, I should like to dance and laugh.

AMAZILI.

So should I. (*They go.*)

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Yes,—dance and laugh. Your simplicity protects you from my rage—but the hole in the wall you'll find no more.—Yet Cora—should that shameless girl have had connexion with these men—Protect us, chaste Oello! Long have I observed her downcast head—long have I remarked that she never sees with whom she speaks, and never knows of what.—The paleness of her cheeks too—oh, these are not good signs—are they Doodoo?

(*CORA enters.*)

Abandoned wretch, dare you appear before me?

CORA.

THE VIRGIN OF

CORA.

(*With great calmness.*) I have just appeared before our God.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Thank him, then, for not having placed his thunder in my hands.

CORA.

What do you want with me? Why are you angry?

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Do you suppose your guilty life a secret to me? Do you suppose me ignorant, that Cora pollutes these sacred walls, her honour and the honour of her sisterhood?

CORA.

I have done nothing wrong.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Look me full in the face—you have intercourse with men.

CORA.

I have not offended the Gods.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Look at me, I say. You know a Spaniard.

CORA.

I am innocent.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Even this very morning you have seen and conversed with him.

CORA.

The Sun was a witness of my actions.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Confess your crime.

CORA.

I have committed no crime.

HIGH

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Loft infatuated being!

CORA.

The way I follow, is the way of innocence and nature.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Headstrong creature! You are a priestess of the Sun. Tremble at the torments, which our rigid laws decree.

CORA.

I shall suffer them undeservedly.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

You have nothing to confide to me?

CORA.

No.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

You will not confess?

CORA.

No.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Cora, I warn you for the last time. But a few moments are your own—avail yourself of them. I know all. I shall assemble the virgins in the temple. I shall summon the whole host of priests. They will pass sentence—and a dreadful sentence. Death is your lot, and more than death—infamy. As yet we are alone. Do you persist in silence?

CORA.

Yes.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

(Altering her tone.) No—methinks Cora will scarcely proceed so far. I knew your mother well, when you were but a child. “Cora” she often said, “has a pliant open heart; I love her for it.”

CORA.

CORA.

Did she say so? Oh, she was a good mother! She took the happiness of my life awith her to the grave.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Surely her memory must still be dear to you.

CORA.

Can you ask it? Many a silent tear now flows, when I reflect upon her goodness.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Would you then prove her to have uttered falsehoods—"A pliant open heart," said she, blinded by affection. Or is it true?

CORA.

Indeed it is true.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Prove it then. The friend of the mother has a claim upon the confidence of the daughter.

CORA.

Oh!—

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Still can I hear the last few words, which quivered on her pallid lips. "Cora is young and inexperienced; if she should ever want a mother's counsel, assist her with your's, for my sake." She spoke, and with her clay-cold hand pressed mine. (*CORA is irresolute and in contention with herself.—A pause.*)—And your old venerable father, when he delivered you into my hands—"There," said he, "take her—she is a good girl, she will cause you no anxiety."—And when he pressed his parting kiss upon your forehead, and the big tear stood trembling in his eye—can you recollect his words? "Revere her as a mother."

CORA.

CORA.

(*Throwing herself at her feet.*) I love.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

(*Struck with horror.*) You love!

CORA.

I will no longer be a priestess of the Sun.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

No longer a priestess of the Sun!

CORA.

I will be married.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Be married!

CORA.

The Gods have given me a heart.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

To devote it to the Gods.

CORA.

To them my prayers and thanksgiving, but to man my affection and my heart.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Cora, collect yourself.—Rise!—You are in a delirium.

CORA.

I have shaken off the burthen—and now—if in the daughter you still love the mother, lend me your aid.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

A Spaniard then?

CORA.

A Spaniard.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

His name?

K

CORA.

CORA.

Alonzo.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Where, and when did you first see him?

CORA.

In the temple, at the king's right hand.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

And what miracle brought you together?

CORA.

The miracle of nature, by which the temple of the Sun was rent, and its walls shattered.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Enough! I wish to know no more. Let what has past be buried in oblivion. You see that your dying mother's last request is sacred to me. I will be silent, and by rigid penance the anger of the Gods may yet be averted. Erase his image from your heart—forget his glossy words—avoid all thoughts of him, pray and work.

CORA.

Oh, surely you never loved.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Thanks be to the Gods!

CORA.

Well, then let me tell you, that all, which you have now prescribed to me, is no longer in my power. Erase his image from my heart! Good mother, you have never loved. When I awake, *he* his my first thought—when I kneel in the temple, my prayers are interrupted by *his* name—when I gaze at the image of the Sun, I gaze at *him*—when I think of God, I think of *him*.

HIGH

THE SUN.

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HIGH PRIESTESS.

Dreadful crimes, Cora ! Pray ! Fast ! Repent !

CORA.

I can pray for nought but to possess him.—Oh what a sweet heartfelt sensation is love ! And do you really think it culpable ?

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Culpable, daughter ? Abominable.

CORA.

And are you so entirely free from love ?

HIGH PRIESTESS.

(*With piety.*) I have devoted myself altogether to the Gods.

CORA.

You deceive yourself, or me. Have I not often seen how tenderly you feed these birds ? Have I not seen you first take one, then another from its cage, hold it on your hand, stroke it, talk to it, kiss it ?

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Oh poor little animals ! So innocent an inclination—

CORA.

My affection too is innocent.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Affection for a man !

CORA.

Is it not the same ? The heart must feel affection. You are content with a dove. Is it my fault if I am not satisfied so easily ?

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Do not deceive yourself, Cora. Is it alike, whether

K 2

you

you employ the fire to offer sacrifice, or to consume the temple ?

CORA.

I cannot comprehend your allusions.—My heart says simply and plainly : “—You may love—love is acceptable to the Gods.” And the consequences justify the maxim of my heart. When Cora does the service of the temple, is the sky ever cloudy, or does the Sun conceal himself ?

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Because you shroud your sin in darkness, because the beams of our great God were never witnesses of your transgressions.

CORA.

They were ! They were ! This very morning in presence of the Sun, I solemnly embraced Alonzo.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

(*Thunderstruck.*) Embraced him !

CORA.

Pressed my lips to his.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Your lips !

CORA.

My bosom to his.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Your bosom !

CORA.

And our God smiled.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Peace, wretch ! —Go hide yourself, ere I repent my promised

promised secrecy. 'Tis no longer your honour to which I attend — 'tis the honour of our order. Go, and be it hard or easy to forget him, you shall never see him more

CORA.

(In a resolute tone.) I will no longer be a priestess of the Sun.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

You must. Death alone can free you from the service.

CORA.

But if I have done wrong, I am not a proper person to serve the Sun,—and if in my place, I substitute a being pure and void of sin, will not this be acceptable to him, and absolve me from my oath?

HIGH PRIESTESS.

I don't understand you.

CORA.

I will devote to his service, the innocent being, which I bear beneath my heart. HIGH PRIESTESS *starts back—attempts to speak, but is unable—trembles and supports herself against the wall.*) What can be the matter? Do you understand me? I will devote to the service of our God the innocent being which I bear beneath my heart.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

(Runs from side to side distracted.) Idali!—Runa!—Amazili!—Hither! Hither, ye daughters of the Sun!—Oh! I can no more!—I shall die!

(She sinks upon a couch.)

IDALI, AMAZILI, and other virgins of the Sun *rush into the apartment from all sides.*)

ALL;

THE VIRGIN OF

ALL.

(*In confusion.*) What now? What has happened?
—She's in a swoon.—Cora, what's the matter?

CORA.

(*As calm as before.*) I don't know.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

(*Recovering.*) Haste, ye daughters of the Sun!
Bar this abandoned being in the darkest dungeon, that
her odious face may not profane the beams of our great
God! Your lives, Runa and Odila, depend upon her
safety 'till the moment of her trial. Let the rest with
all their sisters clothe themselves in deepest mourning,
and follow me to the palace of the king!—The Sun
is enraged! The Gods are roused to anger! Sin rests
upon us, and a curse upon Peru! God's avenging arm
will reach us! Haste! Extinguish every light through-
out the temple, and tear every garland. This day shall
be no festival—this is a day of lamentation! Away to
the steps of the throne! Vengeance, vengeance on this
abomination!

(*She rushes out of the room. A confused noise a-
rises.*)

ALL.

What have you done Cora? Tell us! Tell us!

CORA.

I have done nothing wrong. (*Goes calmly away.*)

ALL.

(*Confusedly following her.*) Take care of her.
Your lives depend on it.—

(ALL go.)

(SCENE,

SCENE, *a saloon in the King's palace with a state-guard. In a few moments the CHAMBERLAIN enters.*

CHAMBERLAIN.

Open the gates. Let all appear, who come on this day's festival, to greet the son of the Sun, and attend him to the temple. Soon as the Ynca is arrayed, he will himself appear.

(He gives a signal—the centinels open the gates.)

The HIGH PRIEST, XAIRA, ALONZO, JUAN, and several priests and courtiers enter singly. Compliments are exchanged in dumb shew. Some whisper to each other—some walk up and down. Several courtiers gather round the CHAMBERLAIN.

XAIRA.

(To the HIGH PRIEST.) What do the foreigners want here?

HIGH PRIEST.

Probably they mean to attend the Ynca, when he goes to sacrifice.

XAIRA.

By my soul, I like not that foreigners should be spectators of our holy rites—perhaps for the purpose of mocking our religion.

HIGH PRIEST.

Mocking! That were folly, and I never can suspect those brave young men of folly. Have you forgotten that to Don Alonzo we are indebted for our monarch's life—that he has made this nation a terror to its neighbours, by teaching us to fight in close-embodied phalanx—nay,

THE VIRGIN OF

—nay more, that he has instructed us in many profitable arts and sciences.

XAIRA.

Pshaw! He has increased our wants. We were happier without him.

HIGH PRIEST.

Harsh man!

CHAMBERLAIN.

Has no one any news for the king?

FIRST COURTIER.

None, except that old Telasko arrived last night from the province.

SECOND COURTIER.

He has brought his son Zorai in order to present him to the Ynca.

CHAMBERLAIN.

How long may it be since the good old man was here before?

FIRST COURTIER.

It must be about two years—when he brought his daughter Cora to the house of stars.

ALONZO.

(*Much alarmed.*) Do you hear, Velasquez? Cora's father is arrived.

JUAN.

I heard it.

ALONZO.

And her brother too.

JUAN.

I heard it.

ALONZO.

Oh horror! How will their most unmeaning looks torment my conscience!

Warlike

Warlike instruments are heard behind the scenes.

COURTIERS.

The king approaches.

ATALIBA enters with his suite. *All do homage to him.*

ATALIBA.

(First turning to the HIGH PRIEST.) Good old man, I much rejoice to see your vigour thus despise the load of years.

HIGH PRIEST.

Beneath such a monarch I grow young again.

ATALIBA.

What I am, I am become through your instructions; that I never shall forget. *(Turning to XAIRA.)* Well Xaira, we have a glorious day. The Gods are gracious to us.

XAIRA.

(Scrupulously.) Yet mournful omens have disturbed my soul.

ATALIBA.

How so?

XAIRA.

The lamb, which I sacrificed at midnight to the Gods, struggled beneath the knife.

ATALIBA.

That's very natural, methinks.

XAIRA.

And the extracted lungs, which when they heave and quiver, are the token of a prosperous year, lay motionless.

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ATALIBA.

THE VIRGIN OF

ATALIBA.

I thank you for the information, but you may conceal it from my people. (*Smiling, and in a half-whisper to the HIGH PRIEST.*) We are disturbed enough by tigers, why should we be afraid of lambs?

HIGH PRIEST.

To the people such a lamb is far more dreadful than a tiger; and the king is bound to consider the people's faith.

ATALIBA.

Right, good old man. On that foundation, Manco Capac grounded his dominion. (*Turning to ALONZO.*) My dear Alonzo, are you still happy in being among us?

ALONZO.

As long as Ataliba is happy that I should live here.

ATALIBA.

That is, as long as Ataliba feels a regard for his friend. (*To JUAN.*) How fares Don Juan? What think you of the troop, which you are instructing?

JUAN.

They are noble fellows, Ynca.

ATALIBA.

Oh that an everlasting peace would allow me to employ their nervous arms at the plough! (*Turning to the HIGH PRIEST.*) It must now be time to proceed towards the temple.

HIGH PRIEST.

We are ready.

(*The CHAMBERLAIN, who, during this scene, has been called away by the centinels, now returns.*.)

CHAMBERLAIN.

CHAMBERLAIN.

Sire, Telasko, governor of Antis is arrived, and begs to greet the first-born son of the Sun.

ATALIBA.

Honest old Telasko! Admit him.

ALONZO.

(To JUAN.) Oh Velasquez!—My heart—my heart—

JUAN.

Beware lest you betray yourself.

(At the CHAMBERLAIN's signal, the centinels open the gates, and TELASKO enters with ZORAI. ATALIBA goes to meet him and embraces him with warmth.)

ATALIBA.

Welcome, worthy friend! What can have brought thee from thy enviable retirement to the bustle of our court?—A seat for the old man!

TELASKO.

Let me stand, good Ynca, let me stand. That posture better becomes a petitioner.

ATALIBA.

Have you any petition? Name it.

TELASKO.

Two years ago I brought my daughter Cora hither, and by her own desire devoted her to the service of the Gods. I felt it sorely I must allow, for I had accustomed myself to her society. Since my wife's death I have been weak and sickly; she was always with me, and attended on my old age. To own the truth, I could not lose her without tears. This boy was then my only

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riches.

riches. He is become a man—his sister serves our God—*him* I devote to the service of his country. To thee, Ynca, I deliver him. My few years are counted. Be thou his father when I am no more. I know he will be no discredit to thee, for never will he forget, that in his veins flows the blood of Yncas. Graciously accept this offer. I present to thee the costliest that I have—I present to thee my all.

ATALIBA.

Be he my own son!—Approach, young man.—*(ZORAI kneels before him.)* Inherit the virtues of thy father, and thou shalt inherit his dignity.

ZORAI.

Forgive me, if I do not answer. Time alone can prove, whether I was worthy to survive this moment.

ATALIBA.

Rise! I commit him to your care, Alonzo. Teach him at your side to fight and conquer.

ALONZO.

(Confused.) Ynca, I will endeavour—to gain his confidence.

TELASKO.

(To ALONZO.) And art thou the hero, in whom a grateful nation blesses the preserver of its monarch? Oh let me clasp thee in these aged arms. *(Embracing him.)* Thy renown, great man, dwells with us on our distant mountains. Our children's children hush thy name. Happy is my son that thou art his instructor!

ALONZO.

(Extremely confused and agitated.) He shall be my brother.

TELASKO.

TELASKO.

(To the King.) Ynca, thou hast sweetened my dying hour. I thank thee.

(The march is again heard behind the scenes.)

ATALIBA.

To the temple! Come, Telasko, walk at my right hand, and when thou feel'st fatigued, I will support thee. Many a time hast thou supported me.

TELASKO.

Blessings on thee, best of Yncas!

(As they are going, the music suddenly ceases.)

ATALIBA.

(Starting.) What means that?

The CHAMBERLAIN rushes in, trembling and out of breath.

CHAMBERLAIN.

Sire, the High Priests of the Sun approaches with a numerous train, clothed in mourning. Their piteous moans pierce to the very soul. In silent tremor all the people follow, and dread some great calamity.

(The whole assembly is in consternation, ATALIBA excepted.)

ATALIBA.

(Composedly gives a signal to the CHAMBERLAIN.)
Conduct them hither.

ALONZO.

(To JUAN.) Heavens!—Velasquez! What can this mean?

JUAN.

Pshaw! I believe you tremble.

The

THE VIRGIN OF

The doors open. The HIGH PRIESTESS enters slowly and solemnly at the head of the virgins of the Sun, veiled and bending forward. While the procession approaches, all stand in silent anxious expectation.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

(Throws her veil violently back.) Woe! Woe! Woe be unto them!

ATALIBA.

(Somewhat startled.) Unto whom?

HIGH PRIESTESS.

The temple is polluted—the altars are defiled—the holy lamp is extinguished. Woe be unto them!

ATALIBA.

Name the transgressors that the revenge of Heaven may be my revenge.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Son of the Sun! Let the festive song be heard no more! Let the garlands be torn from the temple, and the fillets from the lamb for sacrifice, for this day shall be no festival! Let our song be lamentation, and our garments mourning! A viper with its poison has defiled the house of stars. A virgin of the Sun has broken the oath of chastity. *(She pauses—All shudder—ALONZO is thunderstruck. She proceeds.)* Woe be unto Cora! *(At this name, a cry of affliction escapes the King.—Old TELASKO props his trembling frame upon his stick. ZORAI, overpowered with shame, hides his face with both hands. ALONZO is sinking into the earth, but is supported by JUAN. A confused noise pervades the rest of the assembly. HIGH PRIESTESS proceeds.)* Vengeance, vengeance on the murderer of virtue! Vengeance
on

on the libertine, who has abused the laws of hospitality, and seduced the wives of our God! Woe be unto Alonzo! (*The King is still more alarmed. ALONZO stands with downcast eyes, and cheeks pale as death, while every one attentively observes him. Old TELASKO quivers, and gazes vacantly around him. The HIGH PRIESTESS proceeds.*) First born son of the Sun!—Image of our God on earth—here do I stand, and demand of thee ample bloody retribution.

ATALIBA.

(*With gloomy reluctance*) Thou shalt have it.

HIGH PRIESTESS.

Death and infamy is the lot of both the criminals, death and infamy the lot of Cora's race!

(*Old TELASKO gnashes his teeth, mutters the word "Infamy," and falls. ZORAI throws himself upon his father's body.*)

ATALIBA.

Merciful Heavens!—Assist the poor old man! (*The COURTIERs raise TELASKO.—The HIGH PRIESTESS is about to proceed, when the King gives her a signal to be silent.*) Enough, ye pious virgins! I know my duty, and shall do what Manco's laws enjoin. I ask not you, Alonzo, whether this charge be just. The confession may be read upon your death-pale cheeks.—You are lost.—Had you roused my people to rebellion, and robbed me of half my kingdom, I would have offered you my hand and said:—"You once saved my life, and with pleasure shall you share my territories—but—here I cease to be a king, and the friend must be mute. You are lost—I cannot save you. (*In a tone of anguish.*) Oh Alonzo! What have you done?"

ALONZO.

Let me die!—All the kindness which I have experienced in your land, I have rewarded with ingratitude. Let me die, (*Falling at the King's feet,*) but rescue Cora. She is innocent. I alone, I the seducer, am guilty.

ATALIBA.

Rise! My power is limited, and most closely at the side, which borders on religion. (*He stands for a moment in melancholy reflection, and contending with his feelings—then turns away his face.*) Guards! Put him in irons! (*To the HIGH PRIEST.*) Assemble your priests in the court of the temple, and pass sentence on the criminals according to our sacred laws and customs.—Before the Sun has sunk into the sea, let me be summoned to the temple to ratify the sentence. (*Going.*)

XAIRA.

Ynca, it will be necessary to secure the father and the brother.

ATALIBA.

That poor old man! Alas! He cannot escape.

XAIRA.

The brother then, at least.

ATALIBA.

Do so then.—Oh! What a mournful station has a king, when he is forced to punish! (*Goes—XAIRA attends, while ZORAI is put in irons.*)

HIGH PRIESTESS.

(*To the HIGH PRIEST.*) Rise, thou first servant of our God! Add wings to our revenge, that even tonight, the Sun's last beams may shine upon the grave, which has swallowed Cora! Away, ye daughters of the Sun!

Write

Writhe yourselves in prayer—wash the altars with your tears, and hide your blushing cheeks in sevenfold veils, 'till vengeance has erased the infamy, with which our order has been branded by this impious foreigner.

(They go.)

HIGH PRIEST.

(Aside.) Poor Rolla!—*(Goes.)*

XAIRA.

(To some other Priests.) Go through the northern gate, untill, behind the walls, you find a barren spot.—There prepare the vault.

TELASKO.

And first throw me into it. *(The priests go.)*

XAIRA.

(To the centinels.) Lead the prisoners away.

ALONZO.

(To JUAN.) Farewell, Velasquez! When you return into our native country, greet my mother—but conceal from her my mournful end.

TELASKO.

(Seized by the centinels.) Whither will you lead me?

ALONZO.

Alas! This poor old man, Velasquez—this miserable poor old man——

TELASKO.

Give me my daughter! Give me my daughter!

XAIRA.

Away with them all!

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TELASKO.

THE VIRGIN OF

TELASKO.

(*As they conduct him away.*) Give me my daughter ! Give me my daughter !

END OF THE THIRD ACT



THE FOURTH ACT.

SCENE, *a desert place without the walls of the temple.*

FOUR PRIESTS *are digging a grave, and singing a solemn chorus, during the first stanza of which, ROLLA appears.*

CHORUS of PRIESTS.

Prepare, prepare the harlot's grave,
Let each assist with ready hand.
Oh may her fate our country save,
And Heav'n be gracious to the land !

ROLLA.

(*Starting*) What means this ?

CHORUS of PRIESTS.

Accurs'd be her devoted head,
And may the thousand tongues of Fame
Thro' ev'ry distant land be spread,
With infamy to brand her name.

ROLLA.

Whose name ?—Speak !—Answer me.

A

A PRIEST.

Begone from this place. 'Tis curs'd for Cora's sake.

ROLLA.

Curse on thyself, infernal liar ! What art thou doing ?
Speak ! What means this grave ?

CHORUS of PRIESTS.

Away ! The grave's prepar'd. Away !

Lead Cora to deserved death.

Here shall she, far from man and day,

In ling'ring torments yield her breath.

ROLLA.

Ye Gods ! A mountain falls upon me. (THE PRIESTS collect their tools, and prepare to leave the place.)
Speak, hardhearted men ! Speak, speak ! 'Tis Rolla, who begs. Rolla begs ! That you never knew before. What is all this ? What means this grave, and your ill-boding song ? (THE PRIESTS are going. ROLLA stamps violently.) Hold ! Speak, or I'll seize you. (THE PRIESTS go. As he is attempting to follow them, he encounters DIEGO, who is sobbing bitterly.) Ha !—I know thee. Thou wert present.—What has happened, since thy master left me ?

DIEGO.

Oh !—My poor unfortunate master—is in chains.

ROLLA.

And Cora ? Cora ?

DIEGO.

She probably shares the same fate.—Don Juan must know more—he was present—

ROLLA.

Don Juan !—Thanks for the name ! Where is he ?
Away ! Away ! Seek him this instant. Send him to

M 2

me

me here!—Away! away! Every moment is precious.

DIEGO goes.

I burn to know all—and tremble to know all. Anguish and terror have robbed me of my breath.—Where can I find my uncle? (*As he is going, he meets the HIGH PRIEST.*) Ha! There he is!—Yes or no?—True or false?—

HIGH PRIEST.

Your words I do not understand; but the wildness of your looks too well.—(*With a sigh.*) All true.

ROLLA.

(*Pointing to the grave.*) And this?—

HIGH PRIEST.

(*Turning away.*) Oh!—

ROLLA.

Gape then earth—swallow thy rocks and woods!—Ye mountains towering all around me, belch forth the fire of Hell into the valleys—that all may perish—every blade of grass may wither, and this our world be one chaotic conflagration! Rise, ye horrors of the elements! Surround me howling blasts and roaring thunder, that I may breathe more freely—that my voice may vie with your's, and my arm murder quicker than your lightning.

HIGH PRIEST.

For Heaven's sake—Rolla!—

ROLLA.

(*After a pause.*) No, she shall not die. Sooner shall the temple become a desert!—Believe me, uncle, she shall not die.—You may say: “This grave is ready.” Ha! Ha! Ha!—This grave is ready; but is not Rolla still alive?

HIGH

HIGH PRIEST.

Your looks are horrible.

ROLLA.

First prepare Rolla's grave! First must he be stretched upon the earth, and not a vein must move, or one small muscle struggle. Examine well too, whether he be really dead. For know, uncle, as long as I retain one spark of life—as long as I can clench this fist—none shall dare to lay a hand on Cora. I'll murder the priests—yourself—the King.

HIGH PRIEST.

Madman! And will you brave the Gods as well as men?

ROLLA.

The Gods! Oh no! They think like me. Their thunderbolts are in my hand. Their buckler is before my breast.—Short-sighted mortal! Love is the brightest warmest beam of our great God: It opens alike the rosebud and the heart of man. Wretched is he, who leads an oyster's life in some cold corner, and has never felt this beam!—Cora is still more amiable since she loved. She was compelled to love; for the Gods could not leave their master-piece unfinished. And a man without love what is he? A lamp without light. An eye without the faculty of seeing.—But indeed, good uncle, *you* cannot understand all this.

HIGH PRIEST.

Rolla, you wrong me.

ROLLA.

Wrong you! If you feel that heavenly sensation, love, how can Cora's condemnation proceed from your lips?

HIGH

HIGH PRIEST.

Cora's condemnation does proceed from my lips.

ROLLA.

Not from your heart?

HIGH PRIEST.

Not from my heart.

ROLLA.

Then, come into my arms! I wish you joy. You are a man.—But why do you stand idly there? Save her!

HIGH PRIEST.

I cannot.

ROLLA.

Courage! Dear uncle! Courage! Your hoary locks and mild persuasion, with my sword and God's assistance, cannot fail to save her.

HIGH PRIEST.

Alas, young man! Your ardour makes you blind to those steep cliffs, which lie before us.

ROLLA.

I feel strong enough to climb them.

HIGH PRIEST.

The laws of all our ancestors—the customs of whole centuries——

ROLLA.

Nature is older.

HIGH PRIEST.

But not more powerful.

ROLLA.

Evafion!

HIGH

HIGH PRIEST.

If by my few remaining years I could save Cora's life, steadfastly would I step into the chasm.

ROLLA.

Gabble !

HIGH PRIEST.

And what then is this tear ?

ROLLA.

Hypocrisy ! Why talk, when you may act ?

HIGH PRIEST.

What can I do for her ?

ROLLA.

(*Raising his hands towards Heaven.*) Then save her thou, oh my father ! Suffer not the most perfect of creation thus to perish ! Oh save her, in despite of these unfeeling priests !—But how could I expect a heart in such a shell ? It may not beat beneath that garb.

HIGH PRIEST.

Oh Rolla ! Rolla ! You sin against me.

ROLLA.

Your fathers and mothers have carefully instructed you to tear up by the roots each flower, which grows around you, and murder every bird which falls into your hands. He who can best do this will one day be High Priest.

HIGH PRIEST.

Rolla ! That from your mouth !

ROLLA.

All the feelings of your hearts are centred in your own gross persons. To you, beauty is a blunted arrow, and love a fabulous absurdity. For the sufferings of a fellow-creature

creature you can shrug your shoulders. But never does a voluntary tear of pity start into your eyes. For what you care, the world may go to wrack, as long as you can riot in luxury.

HIGH PRIEST.

Young man, I am compelled to answer. I shall speak, and you will be ashamed.

ROLLA.

Yes. Speak! Speak! That you can do.

HIGH PRIEST.

Learn then to curb your tongue, when an old man addresses you, and if you pay no reverence to my age, pay reverence at least to my misfortunes. Am I a priest by choice? Our Ynca's nearest relative is born High Priest. Had you but known me half a century since, I was a bold and fiery youth, more eager far to wield the falchion, than the knife of sacrifice. Is it my fault that wayward chance has placed me at the altar of the Sun, to be a slaughterer of doves, and an interpreter of dreams? Believe me, few among us fill their proper station, and fewest where the station is allotted by their birth.

ROLLA.

(*Coldly and forced.*) If I have said too much, forgive me.

HIGH PRIEST.

A thousand times would I have cast from me this dignity, which you have used as a reproach, for it has caused the sufferings of forty years.—In truth, young man, I will no longer bear that frown upon your brow—that cold disdain in every look. Thou only one, on whom my soul still hangs—thou only one, whose affection

tion I wish to gain—listen to my mournful story.—Alas! It is too like thine own. My sorrows also are sorrows of the heart. My sufferings also are the sufferings of a hopeless passion. I also once loved a virgin of the Sun.

ROLLA.

(*Astonished.*) How!—

HIGH PRIEST.

As High Priest of the temple, I was allowed free entrance to the house of stars. Daily did my eye dwell upon the garden, where here and there a bud disclosed itself. This was long an entertainment to me; but my heart had no share in it, till Zulma beamed among her sisters, an image of the God, whom she adored. I saw her often, saw her with pleasure, and yet knew not why. I cast a look into my heart and was alarmed. She also might have read what passed therein; for she began to shun me, though I perceived it was against her inclination. I wished not to put her virtue to a trial, and shunned her also. Tormented as we were by hopeless love our cheeks grew pale and wan; our eyes languid and hollow. Her weaker frame first felt the shock.—She—struggled with death, and I—You seem affected!

ROLLA.

(*Turns away his face, and offers his hand.*) I wronged you—I am ashamed.—Proceed, good uncle.—She died?

HIGH PRIEST.

I hastened to her assistance. Day and night I climbed the craggy rocks, and searched through caves and woods for salutary herbs. I sent for the oldest priests through-

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out

out the kingdom, who were famed for their skill in plants, and—Zulma recovered. Grateful she sank into my arms—We understood each other well, and wept. (*Much moved.*) See,—old as I am how this agitates me even now!—

ROLLA.

(*Embracing him.*) Good, dear, best uncle!

HIGH PRIEST.

Hear the sequel of my story. The fire of love, so long suppressed, now burst into a flame so wild, that reason and our duty had no more controul. We forgot ourselves—Zulma became a mother—and she bore—*thyself.*—(*ROLLA starts, and gazes intently at the HIGH PRIEST, who stretches out his arms.*) Thou art my son.

ROLLA.

(*In great agitation.*) Old man, you mock me.

HIGH PRIEST.

Thou art my son.

ROLLA.

(*Bursts speechless into his arms.—A pause.—He tears himself suddenly away.—In a rapid tone.*) Is my mother still alive?

HIGH PRIEST.

(*Gazing towards Heaven.*) She is looking upon us, from above. (*ROLLA's arms and head sink down,—tears stand in his eyes, which are riveted upon the earth.*) You will now perceive what anguish your reproaches have inflicted on your father. You will now perceive, why I have hung upon you, followed you to every place, forced myself into conversation, and often borne ill-treatment from you. You will now perceive the cause of my affliction

fiction when you marched to battle, and of my joy when you returned triumphant.

ROLLA.

(*Pressing him to his heart.*) And is there one then, who has rejoiced in my success?—Oh my father!—How new to me is this name—and this sensation!—Oft, when at the head of our troops, I have received your priestly blessing, and felt your trembling hand—had I but known why it thus trembled—had I but known it was a father's blessing!—Oh my father! Why have you so long concealed yourself from a heart devoid of every joy?

HIGH PRIEST.

Who could trust the wildness of your youthful ardour?

ROLLA.

But—all is as yet mysterious. Tear the veil entirely from my eyes.

HIGH PRIEST.

What never was and never will be possible to any one, was to the High Priest possible. The story of your mother was concealed: Soon as you were born, I sent you to the people of Ibara on our borders, whose governor was my brother. You were educated as his son, and when he died, were still a boy. His death afforded me a good pretext to bring you from that rude unpolished nation, to the court of Quito, where you might be under the direction of your uncle. As far as was possible without creating suspicion, I myself educated you. A year before this time, your mother had departed to the place of rest; yet I still drag along a burdensome existence.

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ROLLA.

ROLLA.

Burdensome!—And you have a son!—'Till now I thought myself completely wretched; but when I again complain, may I be called a villain; for, I have a father.—Yes, I am reconciled to this world. You and I never can be really happy; yet a tolerable life, sweetened by many a joyful hour, I promise you. Hear how my fancy paints the pleasing picture. Cora and Alonzo shall fly; we will attend them. I will conduct you far away, to a good friend, who, for my sake will be the friend of all. There will we live together cheerful and content, and if ever Cora's caresses or Alonzo's happiness affect my heart too much; I will give you a signal. We can quit the lovers, sit down before the hut, and you shall relate to me the story of my mother.

HIGH PRIEST.

You forget, Rolla, that flight is impossible.—Both are in chains—both guarded by a thousand eyes—and in a few short hours the priests will pass their sentence.—Oh! Do not thus deceive yourself. Cora is past redemption lost.

ROLLA.

No, my father. You must save her—indeed you must,—Are not you High Priest, and chief of all her judges?

HIGH PRIEST.

What will my single voice avail against a multitude?—Already do I hear that boisterous zealot, Xaira!—Bawl to the whirlwind till you lose your voice, still will its fury sweep away the plant.

ROLLA.

You will then at least have done your duty—to God
and

THE SUN.

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and my sword consign the rest.—Oh think, my father, when the murdered Cora meets my mother with these words : “ I am a virgin of the Sun, condemned to die by the High Priest, and his tribe because I loved.”—

HIGH PRIEST.

Why torture me, my son?—Willingly will I do all I can—speak—beg—use every effort of which a weak old man is capable. (*With a sigh.*) The hour of trial approaches.

ROLLA.

Haste then ! Keep your word ! Do all you can.—My life depends on Cora’s. But if all your efforts fail, you shall find that I mean-while have not been idle. Go !

HIGH PRIEST.

(*Mournfully presenting his hand.*) Oh, may we both be happier when we meet again ! Farewell !

(*Goes.*)

ROLLA.

(*After a pause.*) Good old man ! Thou know’st not what is brooding here. I expect but little from thy rhetoric.—Force ! Force is the only true conviction.—Where can this Juan be ? Would he were here that he might lay his hand in mine, and imbibe a portion of my fire ! Ha !—I will save her. I must save her.—My mother was a virgin of the Sun,—and Cora’s rescue shall be vengeance for my mother’s death.—Oh, if I were not roused by such a thought, my soul must be composed of that eternal snow, which covers the Cordilleras !—

Enter JUAN.

Welcome ! I was waiting for thee.

JUAN.

Here I am. Thy will ?

ROLLA.

THE VIRGIN OF

ROLLA.

Art thou bold enough to risk thy life for a friend?

JUAN.

If it can be of any use, why not?

ROLLA.

Give me thy hand.

JUAN.

Here it is!

ROLLA.

Cora and Alonzo are lost.

JUAN.

Too true!—

ROLLA.

We must assist them.

JUAN.

If we can.

ROLLA.

A bold stroke—a rash enterprise—

JUAN.

With all my heart—let it not be a crime, and I am ready.

ROLLA.

Crime! Is it a greater crime to enact a law, which is inhuman, or to annul it?

JUAN.

The latter is a virtue.

ROLLA.

Which we will practise.

JUAN.

We!—Have we a right to do so? This virtue can only be practised by the king.

ROLLA.

ROLLA.

We will advise the king.

JUAN.

That we will.

ROLLA.

With sword in hand.

JUAN.

Such advice would be rebellion.

ROLLA.

What is the name, if the deed be but good ?

JUAN.

Ataliba has received me hospitably ; and is my benefactor.

ROLLA.

Thy friend is in danger.

JUAN.

I shall commit no crime to save him.

ROLLA.

But if I promise that Ataliba, and his servants shall not be hurt—that our conquest shall be gained through fear?—I was once a chief—the army still reveres me ; for it has often conquered under my command, and in the field the meanest was my brother. To thy care too, the king has entrusted a warlike troop. At the signal, all, who can bear arms, will gather round us.—For ourselves we have nothing to demand. Sacred to us is the throne, and the life and property of every individual. Our only claim is liberty for Cora and Alonzo !—

JUAN.

Noble Rolla ! Love has dazzled thine eyes. Perhaps,
for

for the first time in thy life, thou art harbouring a bad intention.

ROLLA.

I have no ears for all thy frivolous morality. Virtue is a play^{thing}, when no other passions force their way.

JUAN.

Enough! The more difficult the conquest, the more glorious!

ROLLA.

No! No! No! Nothing will I feel but Cora's danger! Nothing will I hear but Cora's suppliant voice! —Look! This is Cora's grave! —Icy being! Look! —This is Cora's grave! —But, what hast thou to do with Cora? —(*Snatches his hand.*) Haste then! Haste to the scaffold which is ready for thy friend! And if thine heart will even then allow thy head to moralize—if even then my anguish—my rage will not inspire thee—I will forsake thee, and hie to the grave of my dear mother. When I first cast my eye upon it; when I see the grass shaken by the wind, thy frigid maxims will at once vanish from my recollection. Away! Away! (*Drags JUAN after him.*)

SCENE changes to the court, of the temple. XAIRA is discovered in conversation with several other PRIESTS.

XAIRA.

He tarries long.—

FIRST PRIEST.

Very long.

SECOND PRIEST.

'Tis past mid-day.

XAIRA.

XAIRA.

What can the king want with him?

FIRST PRIEST.

The messenger knew nothing of the matter.

SECOND PRIEST.

Except that he wished to see the High Priest, before sentence was passed upon Cora.

XAIRA.

'Tis strange!

FIRST PRIEST.

The messenger seemed to be in great haste.

XAIRA.

Probably then, a discussion of our sentence! Alas! My friends! I fear this Ynca will be backward in fulfilling the vengeance of the Gods.—Even this very morning—how hard he seemed to think it that Zorai should be chained—how compassionately he gazed upon the impious Spaniard, and even condescended to converse with him!—Oh! His father was another man.

FIRST PRIEST.

He was indeed.

SECOND PRIEST.

He spared no sacrifice.

THIRD PRIEST.

He trembled, when he entered the temple.

XAIRA.

He revered our wisdom.

FIRST PRIEST.

And our near connexion with the Gods.

O

XAIRA.

THE VIRGIN OF

XAIRA.

He cast his eyes fearfully upon the earth, where his son boldly smiles. But who is to blame? His instructor, his adviser—in short—our High Priest. I shall say no more. This is not a proper time or place, but I know his principles. Mark only——

FIRST PRIEST.

(Interrupting him.) He comes.

XAIRA.

At last!—*(Meeting the HIGH PRIEST.)* We were anxiously expecting you.

HIGH PRIEST.

The Ynca sent for me.

XAIRA.

Is your conversation no secret to us?

HIGH PRIEST.

Oh no! The king commands the judges of Cora and Alonzo, to examine well, whether both have equally been criminal,—whether one has not seduced the other.—

XAIRA.

(Hastily interrupting him.) Well—and suppose that were the case?

HIGH PRIEST.

Then must we punish the seducer, and acquit the seduced.

XAIRA.

Dare I trust my ears? Has the king said this, and dares the High Priest of the Sun, repeat it?

HIGH PRIEST.

Why not?

XAIRA.

The transgressors of the law shall suffer *both*—thus speaks our God.

HIGH

HIGH PRIEST.

Did you ever hear our God speak? Did he not speak through our first Ynca?

XAIRA.

That is immaterial.

HIGH PRIEST.

True. The Ynca is an image of the God-head upon earth—but the last Ynca as well as the first, and where the ancestor has found, among unpolished people, that severity was necessary, the successor may at least abate it.

XAIRA.

(*In a tone of derision.*) Why not at once release them?

HIGH PRIEST.

I confess, the king was much inclined to it. But the welfare of his people claims an example.

XAIRA.

It does—and what example? "*The guilty shall die.*"—Seducer and seduced! Will they not both declare their innocence? Will they not alternately accuse each other?

HIGH PRIEST.

(*Shrugging his shoulders.*) Most probably!

XAIRA.

And our sentence then?

HIGH PRIEST.

Of that hereafter. Our duty now commands us to obey the Ynca. Let Cora and Aez be conducted hither. (*A PRIEST goes.*)

O 2

XAIRA.

THE VIRGIN OF

XAIRA.

No, my conscience shall not be stained even to oblige the Ynca. Both are guilty. Both shall die. Seduced or not seduced is here alike. It shall be said even to the king before his face—it shall be bellowed in the ears of all the people. If the Ynca no longer dread the Gods, let him dread his subjects.—

HIGH PRIEST.

Kaira, beware. Conscience is his law, and also thine. We shall pass sentence upon Cora and Alonzo; but forget not, that God will hereafter pass sentence upon us. Enough! Take your places.

(The HIGH PRIEST stands in the centre, XAIRA at his right hand, and the rest of the PRIESTS on each side.—The centinels conduct CORA and ALONZO from different sides. Both are in chains, and CORA is deprived of the fiery belt and image of the Sun, which hung at her bosom.)

CORA.

(With unrestrained affection.) My Alonzo!—

ALONZO.

Heavens! My Cora too in chains

CORA.

Do not be unhappy. We shall die together.

ALONZO.

And I—am thy murderer.

XAIRA.

Peace!

HIGH PRIEST.

(Solemnly yet mildly.) We, the servants and delegates

gates of God, performers of his holy will, are here assembled, to judge and to pass sentence upon Cora, daughter of Telasko, and Alonzo, the Spaniard.—Send down thy beams into our hearts, oh thou our father, who, with a single look surveyest all creation! Thou hast appointed us to judge of life and death, honour and infamy. Oh penetrate into our inmost thoughts, that no partiality, no self-interest, no revenge may guide us! (*He kneels down, and with him all the PRIESTS.*) We swear to judge according to thy laws, oh Sun, announced to us by Manco Capac! We swear to judge with mercy, if the pollution of thy temple will allow the exercise of mercy. We swear, that if it please thee on this day, or on the morrow, to call us, thy servants, to thee, we will render up account of this solemn hour.

ALL PRIESTS.

We swear!—(*They rise.*)

HIGH PRIEST.

Cora, hast thou broken thine oath?

CORA.

I have.

HIGH PRIEST.

Dost thou know this youth?

CORA.

He is my husband.

HIGH PRIEST.

Alonzo, dost thou know this girl?

ALONZO.

She is my wife.

XAIRA.

You are guilty and must die.

HIGH

THE VIRGIN OF

HIGH PRIEST.

Before we pass the bloody sentence, a pleasant duty is imposed on me.—In the king's name.—I pardon him or her, who was the victim of seduction. Ataliba, son of the sun, beneath whose sway the realms of Quito prosper, requires of you an upright frank confession. Who is the seducer? Who is the seduced.

CORA.

I seduced him.

ALONZO.

I seduced her.—

} Together.

CORA.

(*With anxious haste.*) Don't believe him. 'Tis false.

ALONZO.

(*The same.*) Don't believe her. She deceives you.

(*They both speak very rapidly after each other.*)

CORA.

I,—I alone am to blame.

ALONZO.

Condemn me to die.

CORA.

Acquit him! Release him!

ALONZO.

Have compassion on a poor weak girl—and let the man atone for his transgressions!

CORA.

No! No! No!

(*The HIGH PRIEST is much moved, and averts his face.*)

XAIRA.

XAIRA.

Silence!—Who can discover truth in this confusion?
Make your confessions separately.

HIGH PRIEST.

Peace, Alonzo!—Cora, speak.

CORA.

When I for the first time in the temple saw this youth,
I always loitered where he stood, and seemed to be engaged in something near him. I pushed my veil aside as often as I passed him, and my glowing looks demanded his affection.

ALONZO.

(*Hastily interrupting her.*) False! False! She cast her eyes upon the ground.

CORA.

My burning cheeks—my love-confessing looks emboldened him. He sprung over our walls; yet affrighted at the deed, although scarce perpetrated, he wished to return, without having seen me. I espied him from a distance; I should have fled—to me all intercourse with him was by our laws prohibited; not so to him all intercourse with me. But I did not fly. I called—made signs to him.—He stood irresolute, and trembling, 'till I hattered to him, threw my arms around his neck, and pressed my lips to his. He wished to go—I detained him. He intended never to return—I persuaded him. He described the danger—I appeased him. Condemn me, me only, upright judges—I seduced him.

ALONZO.

Nature at once declares thy self-accusation to be false.
Bashfulness is beauty's sister. Man declares his love;
woman

woman returns her's. Was it not I, who, for the first time in the temple cast my impious eyes upon thee? Was it not I, whose wanton looks suffused thy cheeks with blushes, and banished thy repose? Who dared, regardless both of Gods and men, to climb the temple's walls? Was I invited? Wert thou privy to the sacrilegious transaction? Didst thou not start when I first caught thine eye? Did I not fall at thy feet, and hold thee fast?—Oh! Why say so much? You, judges, know mankind. Of course I was the seducer.

CORA.

Spare him! Spare him! He saved the Ynca's life, and he is innocent.

ALONZO.

She knows not what she says. I am guilty.—

CORA.

Can I not prove that I alone am guilty? He repents his crime—I do not—I glory in my guilt, and here—in presence of the Gods—in presence of you all—*(Rushes to ALONZO)* I embrace him as my husband.—See! How alarmed he is!—He tries to extricate himself—'Tis I, who clasp him—

ALONZO.

Cora, I beseech—

CORA.

Hear how he admonishes, and tries to *shun* me! He always did so, but I would not follow his advice—I would not obey him, but dragged him with me to destruction.

XAIRA.

Audacious wretch!—Tear them asunder!

CORA.

CORA.

(Returns to her place, calm and composed as before.) Now, pass sentence.

XAIRA.

I shudder.

HIGH PRIEST.

Lead them away.

ALONZO.

(Stretching his arms towards her.) Farewell!

CORA.

(Smiling.) We soon shall meet again.

XAIRA.

At the hour of death.

CORA.

So much the better. To the last hour below, a higher power has joined the first of a far happier life.

XAIRA.

Lead them away!

ALONZO.

Farewell!

CORA.

(In a mournful and affectionate tone.) With a tear we part—but with a smile shall we meet above. *(Both are conducted away.)*

XAIRA.

Needs there more?—My decree is death—death upon both!

HIGH PRIEST.

(Sorrowfully.) Follow me to the altar of the temple. Sacrifice to the Gods, and ponder in your hearts what you have seen and heard. Then let us pass sentence as men upon men.

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

P

SCENE,

THE FIFTH ACT.

SCENE, *the inside of the temple.*—*In the back-ground an image of the Sun upon an altar, to which are several steps. The HIGH PRIEST, XAIRA, and several other PRIESTS are discovered—the latter engaged behind in sacrifice.*

HIGH PRIEST.

(*Leading XAIRA forward.*)

XAIRA, another word, ere by any rash decision we profane our holy office. Are we not ministers of heavenly mercy?

XAIRA.

And of heavenly vengeance.

HIGH PRIEST.

Not so. Let the people believe it. The injured only can revenge himself, and God never can be injured. We, who are initiated in the mysteries of a pure doctrine,—we, who bend the knee to an invisible Creator, may surely speak a word in confidence.

XAIRA.

To what purpose? Why at this hour?

HIGH PRIEST.

Because to us this single hour may at some future period be spun out to years of misery.

XAIRA.

XAIRA.
I am guided by conviction.

HIGH PRIEST.
It cannot be. God created man a weak frail being—such must be your and my conviction. Imperfect is this earth, and all that dwells thereon. That God, who can endure the tiger, which devours the harmless lamb, will he not endure a poor weak man, who but obeys the voice of nature?

XAIRA.
But we destroy the tiger, and do right—we punish man for weakness, and do right.

HIGH PRIEST.
I grant that if his weakness be pernicious to the state—

XAIRA.
And is not that the present case?

HIGH PRIEST.
No.

XAIRA.
No!

HIGH PRIEST.
No. No.—You yourself spoke but of the vengeance of the Gods.

XAIRA.
Can you plead for that abandoned life, which would ensue from our neglect?

HIGH PRIEST.
At the rise of a pure spring, we little think upon the mire, which may afterwards be carried with it. I beseech thee, Xaira, let us be true to our vocation. Let us resemble him whom we adore, whose beams spread life

and warmth through universal nature. Let us declare Cora to be innocent. The king may then act as seems right to him. If he reject our sentence, we shall still have done our duty, and the poor victims, with their latest breath, will thank us for our good intention.

XAIRA.

Why say all this to me? You speak as if on me alone depended the decision. Are not you High Priest? Are not you required by your office, to describe the case in an assembly of the priests? I then have but one voice.

HIGH PRIEST.

Alas! Full well thou know'st that I am not allowed to varnish my description. It must be unadorned and simple. True it is, Xaira, thou hast but one voice. But, thou art now the eldest, and at my death wilt fill my office. All the younger priests look up to thee, inclining whither thou inclinest.

XAIRA.

Likely enough!—Yet not so the Ynca. 'Tis still ever in his power to pardon.

HIGH PRIEST.

Mockery! For whole centuries, every Ynca has confirmed the sentence of the priests. Will not Ataliba follow the steps of his forefathers?

XAIRA.

Enough!—'Tis not thy duty to exort my sentence. 'Tis not my duty longer to listen to thee.—(*Going.*)

HIGH PRIEST.

(*Incensed.*) I have done my duty! Their blood be on thy head!

XAIRA.

XAIRA.

(*With deliberate coldness.*) Their blood be on my head.

HIGH PRIEST.

Hither, ye priests! (*The PRIESTS gather round him—*afide.**) Oh, I already read their sentence in their mien! (*He endeavours to collect himself.—A Pause.*) You know the crime and criminals.—Decide!—

XAIRA.

What says the law?—(*The HIGH PRIEST is silent.*) I ask thee—what says the law?

HIGH PRIEST.

(*After some contention, and in a low voice.*) Death.

XAIRA.

(*With a loud but solemn voice.*) The law pronounces death on Cora and Alonzo.

ALL.

Death.—(*A pause.*)

HIGH PRIEST.

(*In a resolute tone.*) I oppose your bloody sentence. My voice pronounces *pardon*. I feel that I, like them am but a man.—Look into your bosoms, brethren. Try your hearts, and if they gently gently whisper to you, *pardon*—join me in loudly calling *pardon*!—

XAIRA.

(*Coldly.*) What sentence does the law pronounce? Death upon Cora and Alonzo.

ALL.

Death.

HIGH PRIEST.

As you will.—Thou seest me, unknown God!
Thou

Thou seest my hands untainted with this blood.—Bring forth the hapless victims of mistaken zeal.—(*Two PRIESTS go, on different sides.*) Place the sword, and the fresh-broken branch of palm upon the altar.—(*They obey.*) Thou, Xaira, follow me to Ataliba. (*They go.*)

Enter ALONZO.

(*During this and the following scene the PRIESTS walk to and fro, and are engaged at the altar.*)

ALONZO.

I shudder!—'Tis but a heathen temple—yet God is every where—here too, where, in the image of the Sun, the creature worships his Creator. And this temple I have profaned!—Cora's murderer!—The murderer of a venerable man, who never injured me! The viper in the bosom of a nation, which has loved and cherished me!——Oh earth! Swallow me and my villanies!—No grass will grow upon my grave! No dew of Heaven moisten it! No wanderer will rest,—no child play upon it!

Enter CORA.

Ah Cora! How happy was I once to see thee! How miserable now!

CORA.

Alonzo,—you cannot mean what you say. You have often told me, if you could not live with Cora, you could die with her. Cora thought so too, thinks so still.—I die with you—to live with you again.

ALONZO.

Such is the ease of innocence. Thou wert ignorant. But I—I go to death, tormented by an evil conscience.

CORA.

CORA.

Oh no ! Neither of us has done wrong.—We were compelled to love.—Was it in your power to have subdued your love for me ? In mine indeed it was not.—Then, who must bear the blame ? Chance, which conducted us together,—or the God-head, which conducted us together.—It is all well.—I am happy in my fate.—Mankind is good, and wishes to unite us.—As a virgin of the Sun, I cannot be your wife—but death unites us.—Be easy, dear Alonzo ! How often, hand in hand with you, I have sprung over the sharp stones at the broken wall. Well, death is but such a spring, and love and liberty will come forth to meet us.—

ALONZO.

Sweet creature ! With thy guiltless soul thou can'st look calmly to the past and future.—But I—

CORA.

Yet I can prove that you may look more calmly to the future than your Cora. Your mother is far, far from here, and when she hears no more of you, she will think that you have died by illness or by shipwreck. She will console herself. Her busy fancy will describe the noble actions, which already you have done, and might have done. But I—have a father—true, he is far away, in one of our remotest provinces ; but he must soon discover how and why I died. Alas ! This alone makes death painful to me. For he is so good a man—and loves me so sincerely.—Oh ! If he were here, his heart would break.

ALONZO.

(*Aside.*) Heavens ! She knows not—

CORA.

CORA.

In this last hour, Alonzo, I have been upon my knees, and fervently have prayed, that my dear father might forsake the world, before my fate had reached his ears. At once, serenity spread itself through my soul, as when the morning dawns. I hope I was heard.—Now my last wish, is, that what must happen, may but happen soon,—that I may quit this world before the solemn preparations rouse my senses, and subdue my resolution.

ALONZO.

Alas! All that thou hast suffered—all thou art still doomed to suffer—overwhelms me with anguish.

CORA.

I tell you that my sufferings are past.

Enter TELASKO and ZORAI, the latter in chains.—
CORA shrieks and trembles.

Oh!—I am heard!—That ghost!—It is my father's ghost!—But his look is angry—(*Hiding her face*)—his look is horrible!—Oh Alonzo! Drive this spectre from my sight.

ALONZO.

Would to God it were thy father's ghost! 'Tis himself.—Oh! What a bitter hour is this!

CORA.

(*Shuddering, and looking at TELASKO.*) My father!

TELASKO.

(*To ZORAI.*) Why have they brought me to this place?—Why just to this?—After having served my native land so long—am I not intitled to some mercy? Go, ask the priests whether I must stay here with her.—Go! Go!—Meanwhile, I'll lean against this pillar.

CORA.

CORA.

(*Fearfully approaching him.*) My father—

TELASKO.

(*In a tone of affliction.*) Save me, Zorai, save me!

ZORAI.

(*Pushing her away.*) Away, basilisk! Spare an old man at least in his last moments!

(TELASKO averts his face.)

CORA.

(*Sinks upon her knees, and raises her hands in a suppliant posture.*) Brother!—

ZORAI.

I thy brother!—But yes—these chains declare I am.

CORA.

Father!—

TELASKO.

(*With his face still averted.*) Who calls me?—I do not know the voice.

CORA.

Brother! Father!—Oh this is worse than all the pangs of death! (*Wringing her hands.*)

TELASKO.

Oh Zorai! My heart will break! 'Tis her mother's voice,—(*Casting a glance towards her,*) and 'tis her mother's form.—Cora! Cora! I am grown grey with honour, and thou hast heaped infamy upon my grave. Oh, if thy mother knew all this! Happy is she, that she died before to-day!—Away from me—and expect no pity!—Hast thou deserved it?—Did I compel thee to devote thy youthful days to the Sun's service? Did I

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not

not often say to thee : " Daughter, daughter, there are pleasures, which as yet thou know'st not ; which perhaps thou one day may'st suspect, and even this suspicion will be then a crime—the want of them thy misery?" Even on the night before the Gods had heard the irrevocable oath—even on that very night, I besought thee—(and God knows what were my sensations)—I besought thee to reflect. " Dear, dear daughter" said I, " as yet thou art at liberty to alter thy intention." The future floated mournfully before my eyes.—Even thou wert sorrowful—and I could see thy heart was full.—Thy guardian angel warned thee—but in vain. Now, do we stand here—I, old man with these grey hairs—the honour of my house for ever ruined—this youth, full of love for his native country, and of manly vigour, innocently implicated in thy guilt—murdered both, by the hand of a daughter and a sister ;—And the companion of our death is infamy. Oh that I had never lived to see this day ! Blessed—blessed is thy mother, that she died before this morning dawned ! (*CORA overpowered by the reproaches of her father, sinks to the earth with a faint sigh. TELASKO, calls affectionately.*) Oh Zorai ! Help ! Assist her !

(*ZORAI raises his sister.—ALONZO is likewise coming to her aid.*)

ZORAI.

(*Pushes him back.*) Away villain—murderer of innocence !—Oh ! How little are these heroes when one closely views them ! How at a distance have I adored this man, when I have heard of his good actions ! How often have I wished to fill his place !—Fool that I was ! His deeds were the effect of chance ! He is but a weak mortal

mortal like ourselves!—Look here, and glut thyself upon this spectacle—Villain! It is thy work.—Ha!—Thank these chains, that I do not, even in the temple of our God, wreak bloody vengeance on thee.

ALONZO.

Didst thou but know the unutterable torments of my heart, thou would'st compassionate me.

TELASKO.

Hold, my son! His fate is far more wretched than our own. We have still one treasure, which we bear with us to the grave—conscience; but he has lost all.

CORA.

Oh my father—do not let me perish in despair! Can you deny your blessing at the hour of death? (*She falls at his feet.*) Oh let me clasp your knees, till you have pity on my agony. Be merciful! Be merciful! Oh bless me, father!—Oh forgive me, brother!—(TELASKO, and ZORAI are affected.) Look at me! I am writhing like a worm. Have mercy on me! Oh! I can no more—

TELASKO.

(*Extremely agitated.*) My son! My son! Let us not add fresh horrors to her death. 'Tis easy to forgive the wretched.—Raise her to my arms. (ZORAI obeys—TELASKO clasps her to his heart.) Die in peace!—I forgive thee.

CORA.

(*Very weak.*) My brother—

TELASKO.

He too! He too!—Come, Zorai!—No ill-will—Forgive a penitent, and call her sister.—

Q 2

ZORAI.

ZORAI.

(*Embracing her.*) Unfortunate—sister!

CORA.

(*Still very weak.*) Thanks be to the Gods! The bitterness of death is past.

ALONZO.

Your hearts are moved—oh—dare Alonzo—sue for your compassion?—Thou hast called me a weak man, Zorai. Weak I am—but not a villain.—Misery binds man to man.—Let us not go to death unreconciled.

TELASKO.

Stranger, I cannot bear ill-will against thee. How can I better quit the world, than when I pardon him, who injured me?—Hast thou too any parents?

ALONZO.

I have an aged mother.

TELASKO.

'Tis well!—For that aged mother's sake—come here, that I may bless thee in her stead.

(*Presses ALONZO in his arms.*)

ALONZO.

Oh! What a weight falls from my heart!—Thou too, Zorai? (*Offering his hand.*)

ZORAI.

Away! I admire my father; but I cannot follow his example.

ALONZO.

Comfort a dying man.

ZORAI.

I cannot.—I abhor thee.—Shall I be a hypocrite?—
Leave

Leave me!—I will endeavour to subdue this bitter animosity, and if I succeed, I'll offer thee my hand before we die.—

ALONZO.

Receive my thanks for this good will. 'Tis more than I deserve.

(CORA, during the preceding conversation has been leaning against a pillar to regain her strength.)

Enter the HIGH PRIEST, XAIRA, and other PRIESTS.

XAIRA.

The king approaches.

(The PRIESTS assemble on the steps of the altar.— CORA, TELASKO, and ZORAI remain in front on one side, and ALONZO on the other. ATALIBA enters slowly and mournfully. He kneels before the image of the Sun, and remains a few moments in a posture of adoration. All are silent.)

ATALIBA.

(Turns to ALONZO—*hastily and in a half whisper.*) Save yourself, Alonzo! Say, you were a stranger to our laws and punishments.—Repeat your numerous services to me—the state—the nation—say all that danger dictates—your friend is your judge. Make it but possible without appearing partial, and I will save you. (ALONZO bows, and gratitude is expressed in his every feature. ATALIBA turns to TELASKO.) Old man, thou art acquitted. That life which has so often been devoted to thy country, is devoted to the Gods. I dare not touch thee.

TELASKO.

How, Ynca! Canst thou be so cruel as to pluck the
branches

branches from the aged trunk, and not destroy itself?

ATALIBA.

(*To ZORAI.*) Thou too, Zorai, art acquitted. (*A murmur arises among the PRIESTS; The King hears it, and raises his voice, turning and keenly looking at them.*) For it is the will of my father the Sun, that henceforth the guilty only suffer.—Console thy father, and attend him 'till his death—then come to me, and thou shalt find a brother. (*ZORAI attempts to fall at his feet; he prevents it, and turns to CORA.*) For you, Cora—I can do nothing—

CORA.

(*With heartfelt gratitude.*) Oh! You have done more than I could hope!

ATALIBA.

(*Sympathising in her misfortunes.*) You stand immediately within the law—and the king too is subject to the law. (*He turns—walks up the steps of the altar—bows once more to the image of the Sun, and then faces the assembly.*) High Priest, perform thine office.

HIGH PRIEST.

Excuse me, Ynea.—Let my age—sickly constitution—and my troubled heart, plead my apology.—Allow Xaira—to take my place, to-day.

ATALIBA.

Be it so!

XAIRA.

(*Solemnly approaching the king.*) First-born son of the Sun! A virgin devoted to the Gods has broken her solemn oath. Cora, stand forth.—A stranger on our coasts is an accomplice in the crime.—Stand forth,
Alonzo.

Alonzo.—We, the priests of an offended God, and ministers of a polluted temple, true to the laws of your ancestors, have judged and passed sentence upon both, and our decree is *death* !

ATALIBA.

(*After a pause.*) Can you defend yourselves?—
(*CORA and ALONZO are silent.*) I speak to you, Cora and Alonzo. Can you defend yourselves?

CORA.

No.

ALONZO.

No.

ATALIBA.

(*Amazed.*) How, Alonzo ! Can you urge no defence ?

ALONZO.

None.

ATALIBA.

Recollect yourself—I allow you time to think—Recollect yourself.—

ALONZO.

I have deserved to die. I die willingly.

ATALIBA.

(*In great uneasiness.*) Think what you are doing—but a few moments are your own——Ye priests assembled round me, in this case I consider mercy as a duty. He is a stranger. That sacred reverence of the Gods was not, when young engrafted in his mind, as it is planted, by your doctrines, in the heart of a Peruvian. He saw not with our eyes—Once more, Alonzo ! Speak ! Say but a single word !—The Gods are just—and merciful——

ALONZO.

THE VIRGIN OF

ALONZO.

I have deserved to die.

ATALIBA.

(After a pause.) Is that all you have to say?

ALONZO.

All.

ATALIBA.

(Props himself on his elbow against the altar, and conceals his face with his hand. In a few moments, summoning all his resolution.) Priests! Do your duty.*(Two PRIESTS approach the altar in a slow solemn pace, and mount the steps on each side of the King.—One takes the sword, the other the branch of palm from the altar. They descend in like manner, and place themselves near XAIRA.)*

XAIRA.

(Presenting the sword to the King.) Son of the Sun! Receive from my hand the symbol of justice. *(He does the same with the branch of palm.)* Son of the Sun! Receive from my hand the symbol of mercy.—Heaven direct your sentence!

ATALIBA.

(Kneels.) Great God! Thou seest my heart. Thou seest it bleed in this sad hour. Oh grant, that I may never more fulfil this mournful duty!—Ye spirits of my fathers! Hover above me with your wisdom, and when I have performed my office—let me in that reflection—find repose.*(He rises.—CORA and ALONZO, TELASKO and ZORAI kneel with heads hanging down.—ATALIBA stands for some moments in contention with himself—then raises the*
the

the sword, and is on the point of speaking, when suddenly the CHAMBERLAIN, in affrighted haste, rushes into the temple.)

CHAMBERLAIN.

Pardon me, Ynca, but I bring disastrous tidings.—Rebellion rages round you. The people run from street to street, in violent commotion. The troops are gathering with the shout of war, from every side, amid the clang of trumpets, and the clash of arms. A wood of lances seems to be collected.—All is confusion, and ten thousand voices lift the name of *Rolla* to the sky. I saw the foreigner *Velasquez* keep his band on one side of the meadow. I saw him fly from man to man, and from his gestures I concluded, that he was using threats and intreaties, to preserve them in a body. But, in vain! One, after the other, went over to the side of *Rolla*.

The whole assembly, except the King, is amazed and alarmed.

ATALIBA.

What is this?—Knows no one what it means?—*(All are silent—to the CHAMBERLAIN.)* You said that you saw *Rolla* at the head. Then, it cannot be rebellion. *Rolla* and rebellion!—No! You are wrong, Did you yourself see him?

CHAMBERLAIN.

Only at a distance. The leaders of the smaller troops had formed a circle round him. He was loud and vehement—his countenance glowed, and his fire seemed to light the souls of all around him. Loud shouts of approbation interrupted his discourse. Every sword was brandished, every lance poised in the air. Then, the

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whole

whole innumerable host proceeded towards the temple. I hastened before them, to bring this information.

ATALIBA.

(With unaltered mien.) The enigma, then, will soon be solved. *(Looking round.)* What now? I discover marks of fear in your countenances. Why are you afraid? He, who as never wronged his people, need never dread the fight of them. Let them come!

A noise is heard behind the scenes, and a confused shout "They are coming! Here they are!" upon the stage.

ROLLA bursts forward, with a drawn sword in his right, and a javelin in his left hand—a bow slung over his shoulder, and a quiver of arrows at his back. Several LEADERS of the troops follow close behind him.

ROLLA.

Follow me, my friends!

XAIRA.

(Calls aloud.) The temple is profaned!

ROLLA.

'Tis profaned already by your bloody sentence.

XAIRA.

Revenge, ye Gods!

(A confused bustle takes place.)

ATALIBA.

(To XAIRA.) Silence!——*(He gives a signal to the assembly that he means to speak—at once all his still—he turns to ROLLA.)* Who art thou?

ROLLA.

Dost thou not know me?

ATALIBA.

ATALIBA.

I had once a chief, who much resembled thee. His name was Rolla, and he was an honest man. But who art thou?

ROLLA.

No derision, Ynca! For God's sake, no derision! Yet thou may'st be right. I am no longer Rolla.—I no longer know myself.—I am driven by a hurricane. Have compassion on me! I revere thee, Ynca,—I revere and love thee—

ATALIBA.

Yes, once I fancied so. "While I have Rolla," I was wont to say "while I have my cousin Rolla to defend me, let the king of Cusko rage, and provinces rebel. His heroism is a tree, beneath whose branches I repose in peace."

ROLLA.

But is the tree to blame, beneath whose branches thou hast hitherto reposed in peace, if a whirlwind has torn it from the earth, and thrown it on thee.

ATALIBA.

What would'st thou, then? Speak, and thank thy former services, that thou art thus allowed to speak to me.—Never have I yet rewarded thee, according to thy merits.—I do it at this moment, for, I grant thee leave to speak.

ROLLA.

I have but few words to urge in my defence. If Ataliba be more man than God, they will avail.—I love. While I was yet a boy, love stole into my heart in a shape so friendly and delightful, that I retained

and cherished it. My soul remained clear and unclouded till the storm of youth arrived. Then all must bend or break. All should happen as I wished, thought I.—All my ambition was a life of careless indolence in Cora's arms, without a thought of honour or my country—or the noble race of Yncas, of which I too am a branch. My good uncle wished to stop the stream, or wished at least to change its course. He sent me to the wars—there I was to climb upon the ladder of renown, and look down disdainfully on love!—In vain! Love mounted with me. Love inspired my heroism. Love accompanied me in every battle. Every great and noble action which I have achieved for thee, love achieved through me. When death stared at me—alas! I never thought of thee, oh Ynca, or my country's good,——I thought only of exciting Cora's admiration. To me thou owest nothing—all to love—all to love for Cora—and 'tis for Cora I plead. I am become older, but in my heart all still is as it was. Still can I feel the storm of youthful years, and the sweet vision of my boyish days. They are become a tree whose roots are so entwined with my life, that thou canst not tear them up without annihilating me.—Oh Ynca! Be merciful! On my knee, I beg her life. (*He kneels.*) Since Cora called me brother, I am proud, but on my knee, I beg my sister's life.

ATALIBA.

(*Who has, as far as possible, concealed his emotions, and supported his dignity.*) Rise!—

ROLLA.

Mercy!

ATALIBA.

Rise, I say!—Lay thine arms at my feet! Let the
army

army be dismissed! Then, silently and submissively await thy monarch's sentence.

ROLLA.

Mercy!—Uncle!—Sister!—Help me to beg. I have begged so little in my life, that I do not understand it.

ATALIBA.

A beggar in arms! Wilt thou insult thy sovereign?

ROLLA.

(*Rising.*) No, on my honour! But thou requirest what is impossible—slumber from a person in a fever. Cora in chains, and Rolla without sword or lance!—No, by the Gods! It cannot be.

ATALIBA.

I command thee to lay down thine arms.

ROLLA.

Release her Ynca—absolve her from the odious oath—and then my arms and life are at thy feet.

ATALIBA.

I make no conditions. I command thee to lay down thine arms.

ROLLA.

I cannot.—Cora, come hither! My breast shall be thy shield! My sword shall break thy fetters!—

ATALIBA.

Rebel! Do as thou wilt, and as the Gods ordain! But know that Ataliba will not pass the sentence, 'till he sees thee kneeling at his feet, without thine arms. Thou shalt not say thou hast extorted mercy from thy monarch.
(*With pathos.*) Ye people of Quito! Harken to your sovereign's voice! Harken to it perhaps for the last time,

time, for from this moment I renounce my sceptre, and my father may decide between you. Seven years I have been your king. I am now standing in the temple, and our God beholds me.—If there be any one, who can accuse me of a known injustice, let him appear! If there be any one, who ever left my throne without assistance, when I could assist, let him appear!—I have vanquished provinces, and conquered kings.—But this is little.—I have opened all my stores, when Heaven has sent a barren season. I have fed the hungry, and relieved the sick. Many a night have I tossed upon my couch in sleepless agony, when your misfortunes preyed upon my heart, and I found myself unable to assist you all.—Ye people of Quito!—I have not merited this treatment.—Seize him! Chain him—or I renounce the sceptre.

A confused bustle.

ROLLA.

(Turns to his followers.) You seize me! You chain me! Who among you will do it?—Oh—thou perhaps, my old companion in battle, who, when the army groaned beneath a famine, shared my last poor morsel?—Or thou, whose life I saved upon the plains of Tumibamba?—Or thou, whose son I rescued from the uplifted sword of his antagonist?—Who among you will seize Rolla?—Speak!—

HIGH PRIEST.

(Sorrowfully.) Rolla! My foster child! How you degrade me! Will you see an old man at your feet?

ROLLA.

I revere the father in you, but stretch not out your arms

arms into the storm. By the Almighty Ruler of the world, it is in vain: (*The HIGH PRIEST attempts to proceed in a supplicating attitude—ROLLA impatiently stops him.*) No more, uncle!—The lots are cast.—I must rescue Cora, or die with her.

CORA.

(*Goes, and throws her arms round his neck.*) Oh brother, this tear thanks you for your love! Accept this kiss from your sister. (*Kisses him.*) You are a great man. I never knew you 'till to-day. But so great, so good a man must be the Ynca's friend. Cora has been guilty of a crime, and you, to rescue Cora, will be guilty of another. This too would weigh heavy on my conscience, and my conscience is already overloaded. (*Smiling and in a soothing tone.*) No Rolla, do not so.—Let me die. My father and my brother have forgiven me. Alonzo dies with me, and I die with pleasure. Our souls shall hover above you, and rejoice to see you loyal to your king, and fighting for your country. Bear the remnant of your life without me—will you, dear Rolla?—Dear Rolla, if my prayers can move you, I shall quit the world with a good action, and bless you for it.—Oh yes!—I see the clouds dispersing from your forehead, and the tear, starting in your eye—do not conceal it—it is a tear, which does honour even to a warrior.—Give me your sword—and javelin. (*She takes the sword and lance gently out of his hands, and gives them to the attendants.*) There stands the hero, and with the tear now rolling down his cheek, the blot is washed away, which stained his honour and renown. —I thank you, Rolla,—I am proud of your affection.

tion.—And now to our good Ynca!—Come! Oh come, and virtue's triumph will be then complete. (*She draws him gently after her, and kneels before ATALIBA, with ROLLA at her side.*) I restore to you your chief.—Pardon him, for he well deserves your pardon.—(*She rises, and returns to her place, while ROLLA still kneels before the King.*) Now Ynca, pass the sentence.

TELASKO.

(*Embracing CORA.*) Oh my daughter!—Now, all may hear it. Now I am not ashamed to call her daughter.—

ATALIBA.

Rolla submits to his monarch?

ROLLA.

I submit.

ATALIBA.

Thou hast forfeited thy life.

ROLLA.

I know it.

ATALIBA.

I pardon thee.

ROLLA.

(*Hastily raising his head.*) And Cora?—

ATALIBA.

I pardon thee.

ROLLA.

(*Letting his head sink again.*) Oh!—

ATALIBA.

Rise!

ROLLA.

Let me hear Cora's sentence on my knees. 'Tis my sentence too.

ATALIBA.

ATALIBA.

Be it so.

The King again takes the sword, and branch of palm, both of which, at the commencement of the uproar, he had laid upon the altar.

HIGH PRIEST.

(Suddenly falls at ATALIBA's feet.) Pardon them, Ynca.

ATALIBA.

(Rushes down the steps, and kindly raises him.)
Thou too, my father! Has Heaven revealed its will to thee?

HIGH PRIEST.

Mercy is the will of Heaven. Those times, in which thy great progenitor founded the worship of the Sun—those rude times are past.—Naked, as the beast of the field, man once dwelt beneath the roof of heaven. His wife was as the fruit that grew in the woods, which every one might pluck, and thus he lived only for to-day, without religion, property, or law. Then appeared Manco Capac, endowed with all the talents of a God. What he said and did, is written in our hearts. He built a temple to the Sun, and devoted virgins to its service. He enacted the law of chastity, for then, as Sensuality prevailed, and Reason was a child, the temple, without this law, would have been, on festivals, the seat of riot and debauchery. Necessity compelled him to restrain nature in these bounds. But a long long train of years has changed the law of propriety into the sensation of propriety. Where the latter reigns, the former is no longer wanted. Therefore, Ynca, I stand before thee in the name of all the Gods, and call upon thee,

thee, the benefactor of thy people to crown thy noble deeds by offering a sacrifice to Reason, and thereby to Heaven.—Fear not!—Be resolute in doing good—and if any thing be further wanting to convince thee—oh may'st thou be moved by the intreaties of a man, who educated thee—who loved thee as his son—who watched at thy couch with anxious solicitude, when thou wert asleep—Reward me this day for all my cares—(*Casting his cap away, and showing his hoary head.*) for the sake of these grey hairs, grown grey in thy service.

ATALIBA.

Enough!—Come nearer, Cora!—Thou too, Alonzo!

HIGH PRIEST.

Bend his great heart, ye Gods!

CORA and ALONZO stagger from each side towards the King.

TELASKO.

(*To ZOBAL.*) Support me, son, support me!

ATALIBA.

(*With his right hand pushes the point of the sword against the earth, so that it breaks, and with his left presents the palm to CORA.*) Abolished be the law—and Cora free!

CORA sinks to the earth in a swoon. ALONZO throws himself at her side. ROLLA springs up, and wildly presses the King to his heart. The HIGH PRIEST raises his hands in gratitude towards Heaven. TELASKO, supported by ZOBAL reels towards his daughter.

THE PEOPLE.

(*Repeatedly call.*) Long live the Ynca!

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THE END.

